EMPOWERING TEACHERS DURING AN ADMINISTRATIVE WALK-THROUGH INITIATIVE AT A TURNAROUND SCHOOL

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

BY
CHARLES REYNOLDS

DR. MARILYNN MARKS QUICK – ADVISOR

BALL STATE UNIVERISTY

MUNCIE, INDIANA

MAY 2017

SIGNATURE PAGE

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BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
MUNCIE, INDIANA
MAY 2017

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encouragement, and hope. My success is a testament of your love and sacrifice. I hope you see your love in this dissertation.

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Finally, I would like my wife Rhonda. I adore you more than you will ever know. The little things that you do every day to make all of this possible are amazing. I hope that one day I can express what you mean to our family and me. Thank you and I love you.

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION PROJECT: Empowering Teachers during an Administrative Walk-Through Initiative at a Turnaround School

STUDENT: Charles Edward Reynolds

COLLEGE: Teachers

DATE: May 2017

PAGES: 179

The primary focus of this exploratory research was to gain insight on teacher empowerment during the implementation of a new administrative walk-through initiative. The rollout and completion of the walk-through process occurred at two high-poverty urban secondary schools that were involved in a turnaround process. Administrative walk-throughs appear to be in direct opposition to teacher empowerment because of the authoritative connotations of administrative observations and the delegation of authority that is associated with teacher empowerment. However, these two concepts share key attributes that could improve teacher empowerment and school turnaround. Administrative walk-throughs can be used to support collaboration, instructional decision-making, and professional reflection on pedagogy. The quantitative data was collected from the responses from the pre- post-Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning (TELL) survey. The TELL survey was organized in seven core constructs to gain valuable documentation and insight of how educators view critical teaching and learning conditions and their sense of empowerment. Qualitative data were gathered from interviews following the completion of the end-of-the-year TELL survey. The results of this study provided evidence that the establishment of a walk-through initiative has a positive effect on teachers' sense of empowerment. The immediate, non-evaluative feedback

from the walk-through may facilitate professional reflection, collaboration, and allow for teacher input about instructional decisions.

DEDICATION

For my wife Rhonda, without your support and love,
I would not be typing this sentence now.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Data indicates the United States continues negative trends in its educational systems when compared to other countries (Hanushek, Peterson, & Woessmann, 2012; McCoy, 2010; Peterson, Woessmann, Hanushek, & Lastro-Anadon, 2011). Because of these lackluster comparisons, the country called for reform of the current educational system in order to compete in a global economy. According to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA), high school seniors from the class of 2011 demonstrated proficiency rates well below those of nations participating in PISA. U.S. students performed at a 32% proficiency in math, ranking 32nd. In contrast, Shanghai leads all nations with a 75% proficiency rate in math (Hanushek et al., 2012). This downward spiral for U.S. students has ignited a renewed campaign for educational reform.

The action and reaction of educational reform can trigger a variety of opinions and emotions. President Obama articulated a need for educational reform as "a goal for America to once again lead the world in college completion by the year 2020" (White House K-12 Education, n.d., para. 1). With these four major objectives, President Obama championed educational reform:

1. Higher standards and better assessments that will prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace;
2. Ambitious efforts to recruit, prepare, develop, and advance effective teachers and principals, especially in the classrooms where they are most needed;
3. Smarter data systems to measure student growth and success, and help educators improve instruction; and
4. New attention and a national effort to turn around our lowest-achieving schools.

(White House, n.d., para 2)

President Obama penned the urgency for educational reform in the United States through the rollout and implementation of Race to the Top. The four pillars of Race to the Top are reflective of the aforementioned objectives. Race to the Top includes these four key areas of reform:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace to compete in the global economy;
2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
4. Turning around the lowest-achieving schools (U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], 2009, p. 2)

Turning around the lowest achieving schools was listed as a priority objective of the Obama administration and was detailed specifically in the Race to the Top initiative. Investing over 4 billion dollars since 2009, including 400 million dollars for Race to the Top (USDOE, 2009), the federal government supports educational reform with robust funding. The phrase "school turnaround" was coined to describe the increased emphasis on rapid school improvement with the lowest achieving schools.

Arne Duncan, the United States Secretary of Education, wrote about school reform in an article from the April 22, 2009, *Wall Street Journal*.

> In order to drive reform, we will require an honest assessment by states of key issues like teacher quality, student performance, college-readiness and the number of charter schools. We'll also have a strategy to address low-performing schools and provide

> incentives to compel improvement. . . We need a culture of accountability in America's education system if we want to be the best in the world. (Duncan, 2009, para. 7)

Duncan's statement further illustrated that educational reform has a variety of meanings to different stakeholders. Depending on the stakeholder, educational reform can mean a radical change in current policy or practice, restructuring of funding, improved standardized assessment results, or college and career readiness.

Statement of the Problem

My interest in this topic began when there was a rapid turnaround in student achievement within a math department. The same students did not show similar improved achievement in other subjects. The improved test scores occurred when I was working closely with the department and completing frequent walk-throughs. The walk-throughs allowed me to have conversations with math teachers about instructional strategies and data. During this walk-through initiative, the math teachers were comfortable asking for assistance, offering suggestions about curriculum, and sharing teaching strategies with colleagues. The key problem in turnaround schools is the lack of student achievement over a period of time (Brinson, Boast, Hassel & Kingsland, 2012; Brinson & Steiner, 2012; Kowal & Ableidinger, 2011; Steiner & Barrett, 2012) An important issue in such failing schools is to determine leadership strategies that can empower teachers. When teachers feel empowered, it is more likely that they will collaborate in sharing successful instructional strategies and ask for assistance.

Purpose of the Study

For this study, I investigated how teachers perceive their level of empowerment based on the impact of administrative walk-throughs, evaluations, and other leadership actions of the administrators in their schools. The independent variables were the teacher subject area,

participation or non-participation in learning log meetings, years of experience in the school, and total years of teaching experience. The dependent variables were teacher empowerment growth as measured by the construct scores and the total empowerment score on the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning (TELL) survey, which compared the scores from September 2014 through May 2015.

My hypothesis was that teacher empowerment was increased when administrators monitor instruction via walk-throughs. However, other new initiatives were being implemented with fidelity in these two schools, and teachers provided information concerning each initiative. The thrust of my literature was on teacher empowerment and the walk-through processes.

Teacher empowerment and administrative monitoring of instruction through walk-throughs are two seemingly juxtaposed instructional ideas. Administrative walk-throughs appear to be in direct opposition to teacher empowerment because of the top down connotations of administrative observation and evaluation and the delegation of authority that is associated with teacher empowerment. However, these two initiatives share key attributes that could improve student achievement and turnaround (Figure 1). Administrative walk-throughs were used to support the collaborative use of data, instructional initiatives, and differentiation of instruction.

For this study I focused on teacher empowerment in two schools. Both schools had initiated walk-throughs as a new process for teachers and had recently adopted a new evaluation model. Administrative walk-throughs are viewed as a formative process to promote teacher growth. The data from walk-throughs are not incorporated into the official evaluation form. The new evaluation model was used for summative or accountability purposes. I believe teacher empowerment as a construct ties together personal competencies and opportunities for choice and autonomy.

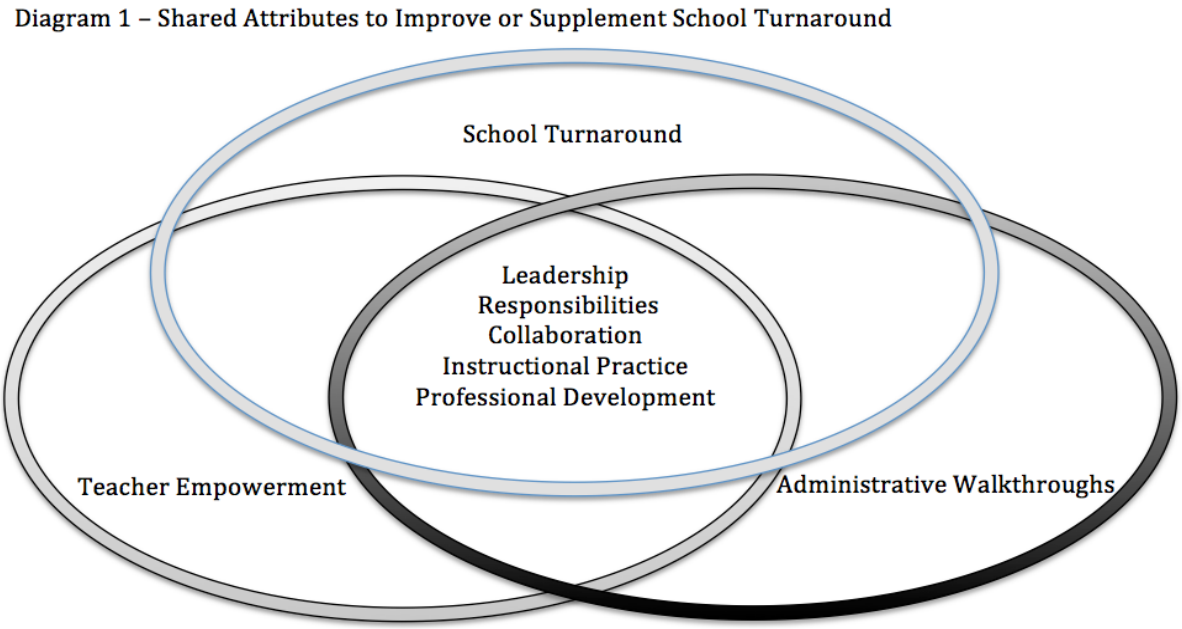

Figure 1. Shared attributes to improve or supplement school turnaround.

Significance of the Study

This study generated information about school turnaround in schools with high poverty, and the possible relationship between teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs. Since school turnaround is a relatively new concept, additional research was needed to aid schools and corporations striving for rapid improvement in student achievement in putting strategies for turnaround in place. The findings from this study will provide new qualitative and quantitative data that will bolster solutions to school turnaround. It is imperative to gain a better understanding of the dynamics in the turnaround process to reduce the number of low-achieving schools, which are typically schools with high poverty.

Research Questions

The following central research question guided this study:

1. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?

Ancillary research questions were:

2. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for math and English teachers when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?
3. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for other teachers who teach subjects other than math or English when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?
4. What aspects of administrative walk-throughs cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?
5. What aspects of the teacher evaluation process cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?
6. What other school leadership actions cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?

The findings of this exploratory study are expected to provide new perspectives on teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs in high-poverty schools during a turnaround process.

Delimitations

There were only two high-poverty secondary schools in Indiana included in the study, which limited the generalization of the results. I am an administrator in one of the buildings, and

I was an administrator in the other building of the study. My presence had the ability to influence data. Both schools were in year two of a new evaluation tool that included additional observations from administrators. However, the walk-through process was not included as a component of the new evaluation tool at the selected schools. The walk-through initiative provided constructive feedback from short observations. The feedback from the walk-throughs was not reflected in the new evaluation tool. The implementation of the evaluation tool in conjunction with the walk-throughs may have influenced data because of the lack of experience with both initiatives.

Definitions

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is a requirement prescribed by NCLB for annual improvements toward federal educational goals ("Adequate Yearly Progress", 2011).

Indiana A-F accountability is the growth model of the Indiana State Board of Education categorical system which labels school performance based on student achievement (IDOE, 2011).

Learning log meetings are periodic meetings with a department or group of teachers to discuss student achievement data and instructional practices. Meetings occur every four to six weeks and are facilitated by an administrator, but lead by teachers. (Davenport, 2002).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is a U.S. act of Congress that is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which supports educational reform (Federal Education Budget Project, 2014).

School turnaround is a quick and dramatic improvement in student achievement data in a low performing school or district (Duke, 2012; Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Herman, 2012; Murphy, 2010; Robinson & Buntrock, 2011; Salmonowicz, 2009).

Teacher empowerment is a teacher's increased sense in autonomy often associated with his or her ability to participate in decision-making, professional growth, problem solving, and status promotion without prescribed corrective action from the administration (Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1993; Duke & Jacobson 2011).

Walk-throughs are unannounced classroom observations of a teacher by an instructional leader—lasting five minutes to 20 minutes—to gain knowledge of instructional practices including students engagement, instructional strategies, assessment, and use of data (Bloom, 2007; David, 2008; Downey 2004).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teacher empowerment and administrative monitoring of instruction through walk-throughs are two seemingly juxtaposed instructional ideas. Administrative walk-throughs appear to be in direct opposition to teacher empowerment because of the top down connotations of administrative observation and evaluation and the delegation of authority that is associated with teacher empowerment. However, these two initiatives share key attributes that could improve student achievement and turnaround. For this study I investigated how teachers perceive their level of empowerment based on the impact of the implementation of administrative walk-throughs. The two schools included in this exploratory study were in the middle of a school turnaround process due to poor ratings in the state school accountability model. School turnaround, leadership actions other than the walk-throughs, and teacher empowerment were investigated in this literature review; however, the focus of my literature review was on teacher empowerment and the walk-through process.

School Accountability

In response to the public outcry for educational reform, the federal and state governments are mandating continuous school improvement regardless of school type or demographics. No Child Left Behind (NCLB), enacted in 2002 by the 43rd President George W. Bush, created a framework for children that was aimed at guaranteeing their academic success. The bipartisan legislation, NCLB, required states to have achievement accountability systems for elementary and secondary schools in order to qualify to receive federal funding. The accountability system is based on state standards in reading and mathematics. The achievement scores must be disaggregated by race, poverty, disability, and language status. Failure to meet the rigorous AYP benchmarks resulted in state intervention. There have been two ways for schools to make AYP

in Indiana. The school must meet all performance, attendance, and graduation targets for the overall student population and each subgroup with 30 or more students. Schools can qualify for Safe Harbor if the number of students not meeting the performance is reduced by 10% and the school meets attendance rate targets (AYP, 2011). If schools have not met these requirements, individual states have established interventions based on the federal government required framework to improve student achievement. For Title I schools in Indiana, the corrective action can include restructuring focused on school turnaround as reflected in Table 1. Title I schools are schools classified as high-poverty, with at least 40% of the students from low-income families (USDOE, 2004). The flexibility of choice increases particularly in Title I schools. Federal monies may be awarded to those schools that meet the AYP goals or close the achievement gaps found in the disaggregated data. NCLB also gives parents flexibility in choosing a school or school system, particularly if their child's school is low-performing. The corrective actions established by the individual states and approved through NCLB guidelines illustrate the importance of swift academic improvement, school turnaround, in schools labeled as failing.

Table 1

Corrective Action for Indiana Title I schools

Years w/o making AYP	Corrective action for schools not meeting AYP Students must be offered
Year 1	A choice of transferring to other public schools
Year 2	Above action and supplemental educational services, including private tutoring
Year 3	Above actions and corrective action, which may include replacing the staff or implementing a new curriculum
Year 4	Above actions and school must plan its restructuring
Year 5 or more	Above actions and school must implement the restructuring

Source. NCLB (n.d.)

States struggled to meet these new stringent and possibly unattainable requirements, considering the 100% percent passing mandate of approved standardized tests (Stephens, 2010). As a response to the rigorous policy, the Obama administration announced it would award waivers to states that agreed to adopt certain education ideas, such as teacher evaluations tied to student test scores (Klein, 2014). All but seven states have applied or were granted waivers to NCLB (Center on Education Policy, 2014). In February 2012, the IDOE received a waiver from the USDOE to replace the existing state's AYP accountability system with the new A-F accountability model. The new A-F rating was designed to be transparent for parents and provide a more accurate description of school performance by incorporating student academic growth (A-F Accountability, 2011).

According to the IDOE website, the number of schools and school districts not making AYP, on academic watch, probation, and now receiving a D or F grade average is about 27% as

presented in Table 2. Since the new accountability model was adopted and approved in February 2012, there was not an AYP status for the 2011-2012 school year.

Table 2

Indiana Corporations/Schools on Academic Probation or Academic Watch

Item	2013	2012	2011	2010	2008	2007	2006	2005
Number of Indiana Schools in the lowest two categories	293	389	340	483	821	746	755	692
Percent of Indiana Schools on probation	16%	19%	19%	23%	39%	37%	36%	33%

In 2012, the IDOE revamped the school accountability system. The new school grading system (which is based on school performance on the standardized state tests) calculates school improvement and awards school grades for meeting benchmarks in performance and participation. An additional calculation for high schools includes graduation rates and college and career readiness. According to Stokes (2012), the new school categorical rating system has resulted in the percentage of schools receiving an A rating dropping from 47% to 40%, and an increase in the percentage of schools receiving an F grade to 7.1% from 5.3%. According to the IDOE (2012) media copy database, nearly 389 or 18.6% of schools were listed in the bottom two categories.

An article by Hinnefeld (2012) illustrated the increased dependence on absolute performance, the percentage of students who pass the ISTEP+. The majority of schools that received an F were schools with high poverty. Nearly 85% of schools with low poverty, or with

the lowest free and reduced lunch rate, were graded as an A or B, and 97% were rated A, B, or C. Conversely, more than 50% of the high-poverty schools, schools within the bottom quartile with the highest percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, received a D or F. A high poverty school was 20 times more likely to receive a D or F (Hinnefeld, 2012). In response to these trends, the Office of School Improvement and Turnaround (OSIT) has established many state and federal initiatives to address and dramatically improve student achievement at these low-performing, high poverty schools. These statistics emphasize the need for significant and swift school improvement, especially for schools with high poverty. This type of educational reform has recently been labeled as school turnaround.

School Turnaround

School turnaround, a term coined around 2009, implies quick and dramatic improvement in student achievement data, (Duke, 2012; Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Herman, 2012; Murphy, 2010; Robinson & Buntrock, 2011; Salmonowicz, 2009) might require an adjustment in leadership, faculty empowerment, and/or instructional monitoring. More specially, the school turnaround model has required elements that should be implemented. Examples of these elements include identifying and implementing a focus; breaking institutional norms; collecting, analyzing, and acting on data; and communicating with stakeholders (Kowal & Aleidinger, 2011; McLester, 2011; Steiner, Hassel, Hassel, Valsing, & Crittenden, 2008). Arne Duncan, the U.S. Secretary of Education, called for a turnaround at the chronically lowest performing 5,000 schools and committed over 5.5 billion dollars in federal funding to assist the turnaround process (Gewertz, 2009).

Attributes of a turnaround school can include adopting a new governance structure, which may include a turnaround leader. The school must use data to identify and implement an

instructional program that is research based and vertically aligned from grade to grade. Additionally, the school must use data to differentiate instruction. The school schedule must be altered to increase learning time. Community-oriented services must be offered for students for appropriate social- emotional programs.

According to Kowal and Ableidinger (2011), the school turnaround process should be guided by principles established locally. This type of reform should be based on factors that have proven successful in the past. Then, schools should continue to reevaluate goals, timelines, and outcomes based on the specific school indicators. For example, in order to accomplish school turnaround, according to Kowal and Aleidinger (2011) and McLester (2011), the building leader should identify, monitor, and act on what the indicators reveal. Unfortunately, increasing workloads have prevented principals from spending time in the classrooms (Frase, Downey, & Canciamilla, 1999). Despite their increased workloads, principals must spend a greater proportion of time in the classroom to facilitate school turnaround.

Administrative Walk-Throughs

Administrative walk-throughs can be an integral component of a principal's responsibilities. Walk-throughs serve as a process for monitoring classroom instructional practice and student engagement. Frequent observation of instruction enables principals to gain thorough knowledge of their personnel and establishes principals as the instructional leaders of their buildings. Another outcome of effective walk-throughs is the opportunity provided to empower teachers through sharing of instructional practices observed during the walk-throughs (Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Murphy, 2010; Ramalho, Garza, & Merchant, 2010). Walk-throughs can range from five to 20 minutes and can be completed by building administrators, teacher leaders, and district level administrators. Not intended for evaluative purposes, walk-throughs

assist teachers and administrators in gathering information about instructional practices and suggesting professional growth opportunities. Therefore, walk-throughs are typically considered a formative supervisory process. A formative process, in the context of walk-throughs, gathers information about instructional practices and shares insights from the walk-through to improve performance.

Walk-throughs, also known as learning-walks, quick-visits, and data walks (Bloom, 2007), were defined by David (2008) as a way to gather information about instructional practices and curriculum alignment. The school walk-through process was originally adapted from the business model of management by walking around (MBWA) (Frase et al., 1999; Downey, 2004; Dyril, 2008). Downey (2004) modified the business model MBWA for the walk-through model of frequent, informal visits by the principal looking for best practices in instructional pedagogy.

Carolyn Downey, a retired professor, superintendent, and now educational consultant in San Diego is credited as the person who coined the term "classroom walk-through." Downey's 2004 book, *The Three Minute Walk-Through: Changing School Supervisory Practice One Teacher at a Time* is cited in many articles (Bloom, 2007; Bushman, 2006; Dyril, 2008). Downey detailed a five-step process: (a) moving staff to reflective inquiry, (b) focusing on the reflective question and conversation, (c) constructing a taxonomy of reflective questions and their use in the classroom walk-through, (d) establishing logistical procedures for implementing the walk-through process, cultivating the culture: effectuating change that works, using the walk-through process to promote a collaborative, reflective culture, determining whether walk-throughs are the right stuff, understanding the walk-through as a discursive practice, and (e) linking the walk-through process to a model of teacher growth.

The basics of Downey's process include short, informal visits for gathering data on teacher decisions on curriculum, instruction, resources, and assessments. Walk-throughs should occur throughout the day and be unannounced. Direct and indirect feedback should focus on professional growth through reflection, coaching, and collaboration.

The walk-through process is referenced by Frase et al. (1999) with four behaviors that are closely linked to student achievement and success. Those four traits are classroom walk-throughs, observation and work in classrooms, participation in classroom teacher discussion and problem solving, and giving constructive feedback regarding curriculum alignment and instruction. Bloom (2007) offered five models for walk-throughs and walk-through necessities for successful implementation—expectations, characteristics, questions to ask, suggestions for improved practice, and the impact of walk-throughs—as shown in Table 3. Expectations for walk-throughs need to be clear and communicated to all stakeholders.

Table 3

Bloom's (2007) Types of Walk-Throughs

Model Name	Purpose	Participants	Process	Frequency
Data Walks	Gathering quantitative school and/or district data	Teachers, teacher leaders, site administrators, central office, community, cross-site teams	Observers gather quantitative data to assess needs and program implementation at site and district levels. Data are aggregated to focus upon grade levels, departments, sites and programs, not individual teachers	One to four times per year, announced

Table 3 (continued)

Model Name	Purpose	Participants	Process	Frequency
Learning Walks	Informing school level professional learning communities	Teachers, teacher leaders, site administrators	Observers gather quantitative and qualitative data to inform conversations and action planning in site-level professional learning communities	Quarterly to monthly, typically announced
Peer Coaching	Informing individual teacher professional development	Teacher colleagues, teacher leaders	Teachers observe one another with the goal of providing mutual feedback and opportunities for reflection upon individual practice	Quarterly to monthly, with sanctioned time for debriefing, announced
Principal Professional Learning Walks	Informing administrator professional development	Site administrators, central office, cross-site administrator teams	Administrators engage in shared observations in order to improve and calibrate their observation and teacher coaching skills and better understand best practices and needs across sites and among schools	One to four times per year, announced or unannounced

Table 3 (continued)

Model Name	Purpose	Participants	Process	Frequency
Quick Visits	Informing the teacher supervision and support process	Site administrators and other support providers, often solo	Data informs coaching support directed to individual teachers by supervisors and other support providers, and informs the formal supervision/ evaluation process	Unannounced and daily to weekly

Walk-throughs linked to professional learning communities (PLCs) and continuous improvement will demonstrate a positive contribution to the school culture. On the other hand, walk-throughs implemented without collaboration and clear expectations might create animosity among the staff and leadership. Key characteristics for a successful walk-through initiative, according to Bloom (2007), are that the focus of walk-throughs during PLCs is grounded on standards and student learning. Walk-through questions need to include who, what, when, where, and why. Suggestions from the walk-through data should reflect the high expectations of a simple process that is aligned with student data. The suggested process needs to be ongoing and supported by adequate resources. The impact of successful implementation according to Bloom (2007) will drive school improvement through the use of data, collaboration, and professional growth.

Abrutyn (2006) identified walk-throughs as a data collection process for students that may help in improving student achievement. Abrutyn's specific example illustrated how a district walk-through process can prove to be inspiring and beneficial to teachers. Admittedly,

Abrutyn recognized a number of district initiatives that have proven unsuccessful or showed limited success. According to Abrutyn (2006), the successful implementation of the walk-through process begins in August of each year when a committee of teachers reviews data from a variety of assessments, including state and national standardized tests. The findings are studied and trends are identified. The committee presented the information at a faculty meeting. The findings are now the focus of the walk-throughs and were designated as a "strength" or a "need" as an example as reflected in Table 4.

Table 4

Walk-Through Strengths and Needs

Strength	Need
All grades have improved in their understanding of the writing process. Younger grades are especially strong in pre-writing and initial drafts.	Some students still lack an understanding of the writing process. The committee recommends having the steps of the writing process posted in all classrooms and continuing to model and discuss these steps.
Students are able to verbalize the importance of details when writing and are able to look at a piece they have written and add more details.	Some students still associate content with length and are vague about how to use details. The committee recommends using anchor papers to serve as models of proficient performance in this area.
Younger students understand the concept of beginning, middle, and end.	Younger students understand organization but need more practice. The committee recommends that teachers work on paragraph development and point out organization when students are reading passages.

As illustrated in Table 4, this focus provides a scaffold for school improvement by focusing sharply on what teachers are teaching and what students are learning. Administrators often fear push back from the teachers (Duke & Jacobson 2011; Murphy, 2010; Ramalho et al.,

2010). Abrutyn (2006) offered insight on how this district negotiated the successful implementation of walk-throughs. The district created a team of teachers and administrators to visit a school that has successfully implemented a walk-through process. Most found the visit to be inspiring and beneficial. The implementation of a pilot program aided in the successful implementation as well. Teachers saw the benefit and administrators gained valuable practice for the collaborative process. Finally, Abrutyn (2006) recommended the involvement of students in the walk-through process. Students like to share ideas, and enjoy speaking to the adults.

The walk-through process initiated with fidelity should be a deeply reflective learning experience for all stakeholders (Bushman, 2006). More recently, according to Dyril (2008), technology is sweeping the educational field to streamline the walk-through process via handheld devices, software, and Internet based data collection. David (2008) recognized that the variety of ways walk-throughs are defined, executed, and documented are numerous. However, when walk-throughs are implemented in conjunction with opportunities for collegial collaboration the administrative walk-through process can empower teachers.

School Turnaround and Administrative Leadership

Change has to occur for chronically failing schools to create school turnaround and sustain the improved student achievement. School turnaround, a quick and dramatic improvement in student achievement data, requires an adjustment in leadership, faculty empowerment, and/or instructional monitoring. Articles and studies have been published, which focused on the steps necessary to create school turnaround and common attributes of the turnaround process (Brinson, Boast, Hassel & Kingsland, 2012; Brinson & Steiner, 2012; Kowal & Ableidinger, 2011; Steiner & Barrett, 2012). Although there are no silver-bullet approaches to

creating school turnaround, this literature review examined articles of faculty empowerment, leadership, and instructional monitoring via walk-throughs.

The Chicago Reform Act of 1988 is an example of large-scale school reform that called for drastic restructuring of the entire Chicago educational system. Not placing the culpability on any one group, this act laid the foundation for an improvement process in Chicago through empowerment and collaboration (Hess, 1994). During the 1990s, the Consortium on Chicago School Research initiated an intensive longitudinal study of the internal and external influences for elementary school improvement (Bryk, 2010; Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999). Anthony Bryk and his colleagues authored a number of articles on school turnaround and sustaining school improvement based on this extensive database. Bryk (2010) established five essential supports for school improvement. The schools must provide a coherent instructional guidance system, professional capacity, strong parent-community ties, a student-centered learning climate, and strong leadership that drive change. Two of the five supports stressed attributes of teacher empowerment. A coherent instructional guidance system established a framework for the "what" and "how" of instruction. Instructional routines, materials, and tools should be shared among colleagues. The concept of professional capacity emphasized that schools are only as good as the teachers in the facility. There must be a support system for teachers that enhances the principal's ability to recruit, retain, and professionally develop teachers. Bryk's (2010) first and fifth attributes stressed strong instructional guidance and principal leadership as essential characteristics or school turnaround. The principal must be a facilitator for teachers by establishing the priorities for resources and acting as a buffer for distractors while monitoring instructional practices. The principal must take the lead and extend himself or herself by reaching out to others to empower teachers.

A school leader facilitating teacher empowerment, and ultimately being held accountable for school improvement, must be knowledgeable about school turn-around and how to balance teacher empowerment and instructional monitoring. Michael Fullan, an international leader in educational leadership and education reform, advised policy makers globally on issues of educational reform. Fullan served as a special advisor to the Premier and Minster of Education in Ontario, Canada, and continues to author books and journal articles. Fullan (1996) summarized change for leaders based on his book *Change Forces*. Fullan detailed eight lessons of change that were derived from empirical insights using chaos theory. The eight lessons were (a) a leader cannot mandate what matters, (b) change is a journey not a blueprint, (c) problems are our friend, (d) vision and strategy plans come later, (e) individualism and collectivism must be equal, (f) neither centralization or decentralization work on their own, (g) connection with a wider environment is critical, and (h) every person is a change agent. Fullan (2002) continued to contend that effective school leaders are the key to change. Principals must lead school reform through moral purpose, knowledge sharing, and improving relationships. A principal leading with above-mentioned characteristics could cultivate leaders through empowerment and develop a social environment that welcomes instructional monitoring.

The correlation of the principal's ability as an instructional leader and the effect on student achievement were detailed in a 2005 meta-analysis by Marzano, Waters, and McNulty. The meta-analysis consisted of 69 studies involving 2,802 schools, nearly 1.4 million students, and 14,000 teachers. The study recognized 21 responsibilities of the principal and the correlation with student academic achievement. Many of the 21 tasks identified are related to characteristics of teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs (Marzano et al., 2005). Of the 21 responsibilities, communication, flexibility, focus, input, involvement in curriculum assessments,

instruction, knowledge of curriculum assessment, instruction, and monitoring and evaluating were the most important.

A non-educational institution approach to school turnaround provides additional research and empirical data of a turnaround process for schools, since there is relatively limited research and empirical data (Murphy, 2010). The correlations made by Murphy capitalized on the research data and the recovery efforts of non-educational organizations and established lessons for turning around a failing school. The lessons emphasized leadership and leadership efficiency. In nearly all cases of positive turnaround a change in leadership was a critical component during the turnaround process (Murphy, 2010). Strong leaders need to be in place to act quickly, diagnose problems and remedies, and direct focus to empower others.

Teacher Empowerment and Leadership Opportunities

As the status of teachers continues to erode (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Dillon, 2011; Osunde & Omoruyi, 2005) leaders should support teachers in gaining a sense of autonomy. Self-efficacy and impact refers to the teachers' sense of their ability to positively affect student learning through empowerment and decision-making (Short, 1994). Additional earlier research from Short (1994) and Blasé & Blasé (2001) strengthened Duke and Jacobson's (2011) findings and defined the dimensions of teacher empowerment as decision-making, autonomy, professional growth, status, self-efficacy, and impact. Decision-making and autonomy are closely related. These two dimensions can include the teachers' ability to influence or select budgetary, scheduling, curricular, and professional growth opportunities. Participation in the decision-making process increases teachers' control of their work environment. Professional growth opportunities refers to teachers' perceptions that the school can provide them with

opportunities to continuously learn and develop their respective skill sets. There are many common themes found in articles, books, and studies for facilitating teacher empowerment.

For some underachieving low socioeconomic schools, the pressure of school improvement and sustaining school improvement is a monumental challenge. Ramalho et al. (2010) and Duke and Jacobson (2011) examined schools with a high percentage of students on free/reduced lunch, a high-minority student population, and with the principals of these buildings who have demonstrated high levels of sustained school improvement. These school principals demonstrate a concentrated effort to empower teachers by involving teachers in the decision-making process and providing them with leadership opportunities.

Teacher empowerment has been described as a process. Teachers develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems without prescribed corrective action from the administration (Short, 1994). Teachers should not work in isolation, but address concerns collaboratively with their colleagues. Teacher empowerment as a construct ties personal competencies and abilities to environments that provide opportunities for choice and autonomy. Duke and Jacobson (2011) examined two low-performing and high-poverty high schools in Texas and how these schools improved student achievement. The principals fostered their respective school turnarounds through many similar steps. Each principal facilitated a schedule adjustment that allowed for a common planning time for teachers to make instructional and curricular decisions. Principals collaborated with math and English teachers for strategy sharing, and worked together on data points to focus faculty energy and empower teachers. This example of teacher empowerment was fostered in a school turnaround process while the administration closely monitored teachers and student growth.

Rinehart and Short (1993) and Short and Rinehart (1993) completed a study of teachers, administrators and teacher leaders from six different states. Numerous schools participating in an empowerment project responded to a measure of empowerment and a measure of school climate. These schools were participating in national school empowerment project to create empowered schools. The study used an instrument called the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES), which was created by Short and Rinehart (1993) to measure empowerment. Their study indicated teacher empowerment is relative to the teacher's age, experience, and perception of school climate. The study also implied that teachers who perceive a greater sense of empowerment believe their impact on the organization and students is greater. However, Short and Rinehart (1993) cautioned organizations about high levels of empowerment. Teachers who were involved in decision-making, have higher status and autonomy, but must be sensitive to organizational conflict. The more input the teachers have on decision-making, and the greater the teacher status and autonomy, the more complex organizational communication and conflict resolution might be. Administrative walk-throughs may be the key to organizational communication and conflict resolution. Completing walk-throughs allows administrators to facilitate conflict resolution via an understanding of the interworking of each classroom. Then, communicating with entire departments or groups of teachers will have greater impact.

More recently, a study by Papanastasiou and Zembylas (2005) reinforced an earlier study by Rinehart and Short (1993) that argued as teacher empowerment increases so does job satisfaction. The studies identified empowerment and recorded job satisfaction as the teachers' opportunities to participate in decision-making about the teaching and learning environment increased. The Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2005) study illustrated teachers' satisfaction compared to four dimensions of teacher empowerment: professional growth, promotion,

decision-making, and status. The study sample consisted of 449 elementary and secondary teachers from Cyprus. The results supported the claim that teachers experienced more job satisfaction with increased teacher empowerment through professional growth, promotion, decision-making, and status. Further, it was suggested that these empowered teachers have a higher impact on student achievement (Papanastasiou & Zembylas, 2005; Short & Rinehart, 1993). Contrary to a Lipsky (1992) article that claimed an empowered teacher creates a teacher centered learning environment, teacher empowerment can create student-centered educational environment. Empowered teacher decisions are made using student data in collaboration, not in isolation, with colleagues. Instructional decisions on curriculum and assessment are derived through open communication centered on student needs (Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Papanastasiou & Zembylas, 2005; Ramalho, 2010; Rinehart & Short, 1994; Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1993).

Short and Johnson (1994) completed a study that examined the nature of the relationship between the school leader's power and the amount of conflict with teachers' perceptions of their empowerment. The study associates six underlying dimensions of empowerment: involvement in decision-making, teacher impact, teacher status, autonomy, opportunities for professional development, and teacher self-efficacy. In conjunction with these six dimensions, Short and Johnson found conflict as an integral part of the empowerment process. The functional, or dysfunctional, conflict management process employed by the principal enhanced the school organization or created chaos and interfered with productivity. The study found the principal who used referent power in place of legitimate power was more likely to involve the faculty in the decision-making process. Thus, per the empirical evidence in this study there is a relationship between the need for principals' leadership and teachers' feelings of empowerment.

The relationship outlined by Short and Johnson (1994) further associated the need for the contrasting ideas of teacher empowerment and administrative oversight. The administrative walk-through process gathers information about instructional practices and allows the administrator to facilitate the teacher's ability to be involved and or lead professional development with colleagues.

Additional research based on findings from the teaching, empowering, leading, and learning (TELL) of Tennessee further emphasized the importance of teacher empowerment. The study defined core constructs that describe factors contributing to teacher satisfaction, teacher retention, and empowerment. Attributes of teacher empowerment include a number of components similar to previously mentioned researchers' findings including collaboration time, decision-making opportunities, professional development, and leadership opportunities (New Teacher Center, 2011). More specifically, teacher empowerment and retention are associated with their perception of the school's administration and their ability to create a trusting, supportive environment to address teacher concerns. For the purpose of this study, I focused on administrative walk-through as the means of the administrative support.

Summary

The literature review yielded information on how the school turnaround process can occur. Existing research suggested that teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs are key components of improved student achievement and school turnaround. However, there is a gap in the literature that ties the implementation of teacher empowerment initiatives and administrative walk-throughs together.

Principals in schools that empowered teachers to make decisions about curriculum, instructional practices, and provided additional resources demonstrated increased student

achievement. Additionally, teachers who were provided these empowerment attributes, with time for collaboration, reported having a greater sense of job satisfaction. The improved job satisfaction allowed for greater professional growth and a greater positive impact on student achievement. Conflict may occur if empowerment initiatives were not implemented with fidelity. The principal should institute the empowerment framework through communication and collaboration with all stakeholders.

Additionally, in this era of principal accountability for school performance, the school leader must closely monitor teacher instructional strategies, data disaggregation, and student assessments. The school leader can monitor these practices via the walk-through process. This literature review supported the important contribution of the walk-through process to school turnaround. The walk-through process, adapted and implemented correctly from the MBWA philosophy developed by the business sector, should create a culture for professional growth, reflections, and collaboration. Student learning and engagement should be the focus of the walk-through process. Although the consensus on the frequency and the duration of a walk-through may vary, the possibility of a positive impact seems likely.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

This chapter provides details about the research methods to answer the questions about the relationship of teacher empowerment to administrative walk-throughs, teacher evaluation, and other administrative actions during a school turnaround initiative. I hypothesized that teacher empowerment increases when administrators monitor instruction via walk-throughs. However, other new initiatives are being implemented with fidelity in these two schools, and teachers will provide information concerning each initiative. Sections of this chapter include an outline and rationale for the research design, a description of the sample, and an overview of the data collection, data analysis, the instrument, and limitations.

Purpose of the Study

For this study I investigated how teachers perceive their level of empowerment based on the impact of administrative walk-throughs, evaluations, and other leadership actions of the administrators in their schools. The independent variables were the teacher subject area, participation or non-participation in learning log meetings, years of experience in the school, and total years of teaching experience. The dependent variables were teacher empowerment growth as measured by the construct scores and the total empowerment score on the TELL survey comparing the scores from September 2014 until May 2015.

Research Questions

The following central research question guided this study:

1. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?

Ancillary research questions were:

2. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for math and English teachers when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?
3. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for other teachers who teach subjects other than math or English when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?
4. What aspects of administrative walk-throughs cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?
5. What aspects of the teacher evaluation process cause the teacher s to feel more or less empowered?
6. What other school leadership actions cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?

The findings of this exploratory study are expected to provide new perspectives on teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs in high-poverty schools during a turnaround process.

Research Design

This exploratory study was designed to determine if there was a relationship between administrative walk-throughs and teachers' increased sense of empowerment. The information for this study was obtained through mixed method procedures from teachers and administrators involved in a school turnaround process in Indiana at two schools with high poverty levels. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods can provide complementary empirical and enlightening data (Creswell, 2002; Hoy, 2010), and both were employed in this study. The

purpose of mixing research methodology is to provide depth to the research. In addition, neither quantitative nor qualitative methods alone sufficiently capture the trends and details of the complex juxtaposition between teacher empowerment and administrative actions during school improvement efforts. The numerical and narrative information provided by the quantitative and qualitative data, respectively, illustrate these complex educational concepts with much greater detail and how they relate.

The purpose of the quantitative study is to objectively gather empirical information from a pre- and post-survey and assign mathematical expressions to relationships (Hoy, 201). Creswell (2009) explained that quantitative survey design is used when "examining the relationship between and among variables is essential to answering questions and hypotheses through surveys and experiments" (p. 145). The quantitative research focused on the relationship of the teacher's feeling of empowerment during a school-turnaround process while the administrative team was completing weekly walk-throughs for teachers of math and English and bi-weekly walk-throughs for teachers of all other subject areas. In addition, I compared the relationship of those teachers who participated in learning log meetings and those teachers who did not participate in learning log meetings. The purpose of the quantitative design of the exploratory study is to describe the data, and to gain a better understanding of the teachers' perspectives and to discover how their perceptions are shaped by contexts (Maxwell, 2013). I isolated the variables that related to teacher empowerment during an administrative walk-through initiative and determined the impact of the relationships. The quantitative data were collected from the completion of the walk-through process and the responses from the pre- post-survey seven core constructs of the TELL survey. The pre-walk-through initiative survey was coded by subject and the name of the street where the teacher grew-up. The pre-survey was archival data

that were completed in September 2014. Post-walk-through initiative survey were completed in May 2015 and coded with the same anonymous code.

The purpose of the qualitative design is to gather multiple meanings of individual experiences to illustrate the themes of data from teachers, and how their perceptions are shaped by the school turnaround context (Creswell, 1998). I collected data from those who were vested in the turnaround process during administrative walk-through initiatives. The qualitative data were collected from the optional open-ended response from the post survey data, anecdotal comments from walk-throughs, a reflective journal, and the interview of 10 teachers. The interviews occurred in May or June 2015 after the completion of the TELL post-survey.

Sample

School context. This exploratory study was conducted at two Indiana schools that had a high percentage of student poverty and were immersed in school turnaround processes with administrators who were minimally completing one walk-through every other week. The sampling was from the teachers and administrators at a two secondary schools. The first, a middle school (MS) had an enrollment of 755 students in Grades 6 through 8. The enrollment ethnicity breakdown for the 2013-2014 school year was 70.3% White, African American was 17.5%, multiracial was 9.1%, Hispanic was 2.4% c, and Native American was .4%. Of the 755 students, 642 students (84.9%) received free or reduced lunch. The MS sample school was on academic watch or received an accountability grade of F for the last four years. In addition, the ISTEP scores were below the state average during this time as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Middle School Sample School Data

Item	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009- 2010
ISTEP % passing both	48.0	46.3	46.3	49.9	43.1
ISTEP Math passing %	64.6	66.4	61.5	64.1	48.1
ISTEP English Passing %	53.0	50.5	54.9	58.9	53.5
School Designation/Grade	F	F	F	Academic Watch (D)	Academic Watch (D)

The second school in the sampling was teachers and administrators from a high school with an enrollment of 913 students. The ethnic breakdown of the high school was 61.2% White, 24.1% African-American, 9.5% multiracial, 2.8% Hispanic, 1.9% Asian, and .3% Native American Indian. Of the 913 high school students 563 (61%) of these students received free or reduced lunch. During the 2009-2010 school year, the high school was classified as a school on "Academic Probation" and following a school visit by the IDOE technical assistant team (TAT), deemed unacceptable in the school's readiness to learn, readiness to teach, and readiness to act (IDOE, 2010). Although scores reflected the academic probation classification in 2009-2010, the accountability test scores and school grade showed improvement as shown in Table 6 (IDOE, 2015). According to Indiana's federal accountability waiver, any school receiving a D or an F school designation in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school year, was classified as a Priority School

or in a turnaround status (IDOE, 2011). The purpose of selecting this school was to provide practical insight immediately for the school district.

Table 6

High School Sample School Data

Item	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009- 2010
End of Course Assessment Algebra passing %	81.0	84.8	78.8	64.1	48.1
End of Course Assessment English Passing %	77.8	71.7	75.7	70.8	59.4
School Designation / Grade	B	A	B	Academic Progress (C)	Academic Watch (D)

Teacher sample: Survey and walk-throughs. The teacher sampling for the survey and walk-throughs consisted of the 198 educators who taught in the two secondary buildings. Teachers who taught math, English, science, or social studies were selected to participate in a voluntary interview. The interview candidate pool consisted of 198 teachers, 34 teachers were from the middle school and 54 of the sample were from the high school. The middle school sample of 34 teachers was composed of 12 English, 12 math, five social studies, and five science teachers. The 54 participants from the high school sample were made up of 19 English, 19 Math, 10 social studies, and 10 science teachers as presented in Table 3. The demographics from the sample were described precisely from the information they provide on the survey.

Teacher sample: Interviews. The teacher interview sample consisted of 10 teachers, six from the high school and four from the middle school sample from all three subject area

categories: math/English, science/social studies, and other subjects (Table 7). Teacher selection represented the core subject areas, a variety of experience levels (beginning, experienced, veteran), and experience-level categories in their respective buildings. The high school interview sample included three math/English teachers, two science/social studies teachers, and one teacher of other subjects. The remaining interview sample consisted of two math/English teachers, one science/social studies teacher, and one teacher from other subjects for a total of four from the middle school. More teachers from English and math were selected to participate in the interviews because there were a larger number of math/English teachers in the schools compared to all other subjects (50 to 37 respectively). Further, the additional high school teachers in the sample were reflective of the larger teacher population. The math and English teachers who were interviewed participated in learning log meetings and were observed during walk-throughs. The science and social studies teachers also participated in walk-throughs, but did not participate in the learning log meetings. The purpose of selecting teachers who did and did not participate in learning log meetings was to compare the teachers' perceptions of empowerment between those two groups. Teachers who attended learning log meetings were provided additional time for collaboration and student data review with building administrators and other teachers who taught the same subject matter. Interview numbers could be adjusted until I reached a saturation level in responses.

Table 7

Teacher Samples

Teacher Sample	English Teachers		Math Teachers		Science Teachers		Social Studies Teachers		Teachers	
		Inter-views		Inter-views		Inter-views		Inter-views	Total	Total Inter-views
Middle School Teachers	12	1	12	1	5	1	5	1	24	4
High School Teachers	19	2	19	2	10	1	10	1	44	6
Sample Totals	29	3	29	3	15	2	15	2	89	10

Administrative sample. The administrative sample included nine administrators from the two secondary buildings, six from high school and three from middle school. These numbers represented all administrators who completed walk-throughs at their respective buildings. The administrative sample was composed of three women and six men. The ethnic breakdown was two African-American and seven White administrators. The mean age of the administrators was 46 with a six-year mean of administrative experience.

Data Collection

Quantitative data collected included walk-through data from the nine participating school administrators. Teachers received a minimum of one formal walk-through every other week. Math and English teachers received additional walk-throughs. Supplementary walk-throughs were completed due to teacher invitations during additional contact via learning log meetings and monthly departmental PLC meetings. A formal walk-through lasted a minimum of 10

minutes in duration. By the end of the day following the walk-through, the teacher received a completed walk-through form (Appendix E). The formal walk-through had a check-off of observed classroom attributes in three domains—teacher planning and preparation, instructional practices, and management and professionalism. Included in the formal walk-through forms were anecdotal notes for the teachers based on the observation. This process provided immediate feedback to teachers after administrators conducted walk-throughs.

Walk-through forms were collected from the building principal and the assistant principals over the course of six months. Each walk-through form was coded for completion. The walk-through form included yes or no responses for students engaged, students off-task, literacy strategies in use, student data being utilized to guide instructions, departmental collaboration evident in instructional practices, and departmental collaboration evident in assessment activities. The administrative walk-through notes forms included the teachers' subject, date, period, classroom observation notes, and if any administrative action was taken (e.g. professional conversations, praise note).

To improve walk-through inter-rater reliability, administrators received two days of professional development on classroom observations. The professional development included rating student engagement, scripting, and inter-rater consistency. The walk-through process was monitored throughout the school year to ensure homogeneity during the initiative. The administrative team consisting of the building principal, assistant principals, and associate principals met weekly to discuss completion of the walk-throughs, instructional trends, concerns, and, timeliness of feedback, completion of the walk-throughs. The high school and middle school walk-through models collected the same data on the same forms; however, the middle school tool was electronic and the high school tool was paper and pencil. Administrators

submitted forms prior to the end of the day that the walk-through occurred. Even though the participants received training to improve consistency, for the purpose of this exploratory study, walk-throughs were monitored for a reference of completion only noting that the walk-through occurred. Therefore, walk-through forms were coded for completion of the walk-through process.

Teachers completed a survey to gain insight on their feelings of teacher empowerment during the administrative walk-through process. The survey was anonymous in order to solicit honest feedback. However, the survey was coded according to subject taught, learning log meeting participation, and experience level in order to identify trends in data analysis.

In addition to the quantitative data collection from TELL survey, qualitative data were collected from the walk-through anecdotal notes and coded if there was evidence of teacher empowerment attributes. For example, is there evidence of collaborative instructional practices? Supplemental qualitative data were collected every six weeks via departmental learning log meetings with math and English/language arts (ELA) teachers. During these meetings the administrator recorded evidence of teacher empowerment qualities.

I maintained a reflective journal to document the administrators' weekly reactions to the walk-through and evidence of teacher empowerment. The journal allowed me to describe actions, reactions, assumptions, and expectations. I acknowledged the opportunities for biases and noted possible biases about conducting the research in the reflective journal. This reflexive approach in the reflective journaling process created transparency in the research process.

Anecdotal notes were recorded and coded. These comments were only logged if the notes pertained to attributes of teacher empowerment including teacher planning and preparation, instructional practices, and professional development. All teachers had the opportunity to

respond to an optional open-ended question at the conclusion of the TELL post-survey. The single question provided additional information on administrative actions that have changed teachers' perceptions about their empowerment.

Interviews were conducted with three math/English teachers, two science/social studies teachers, and one teacher of other subjects from the high school. In addition, I conducted interviews with two math/English teachers, one science/social studies teacher, and one teacher of other subjects from the middle school. I did not interview any teacher with whom I was responsible for evaluating. I communicated that the interview data would be coded by subject taught, experience level, and pseudonym, not by teacher name. All interview participants completed a consent form (Appendix D) and all data collected were confidential. The interview protocol included a script with an introduction, open-ended interview questions, and a conclusion (Appendix F). The questions afforded teachers the opportunity to give comments on the walk-through initiative, the new evaluation tool, and the other leadership actions not associated with the walk-through initiative or the teacher evaluation tool (i.e. time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, professional development opportunities, and instructional practice and support). Interviews lasted approximately 30-minutes and were audio recorded. Participants were assigned pseudonyms that were used to protect participants' identities. The pseudonyms were matched to the corresponding survey. Pseudonyms protect participants' identities. Follow-up interviews were not conducted since all questions were answered with complete detailed responses. In addition, I felt that I reached a saturation point with data since participants were consistently referencing similar leadership actions and not offering new insights during the interviews. Data collected from the qualitative study offered additional details including a completeness of data, credibility of the quantitative data, context, an illustration of the

quantitative data, and diversity of views from the researcher and the participants (Bryman, 2008). To illustrate the research design, I followed the Concurrent Triangulation Design Visual Model (Figure 2) per Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2006).

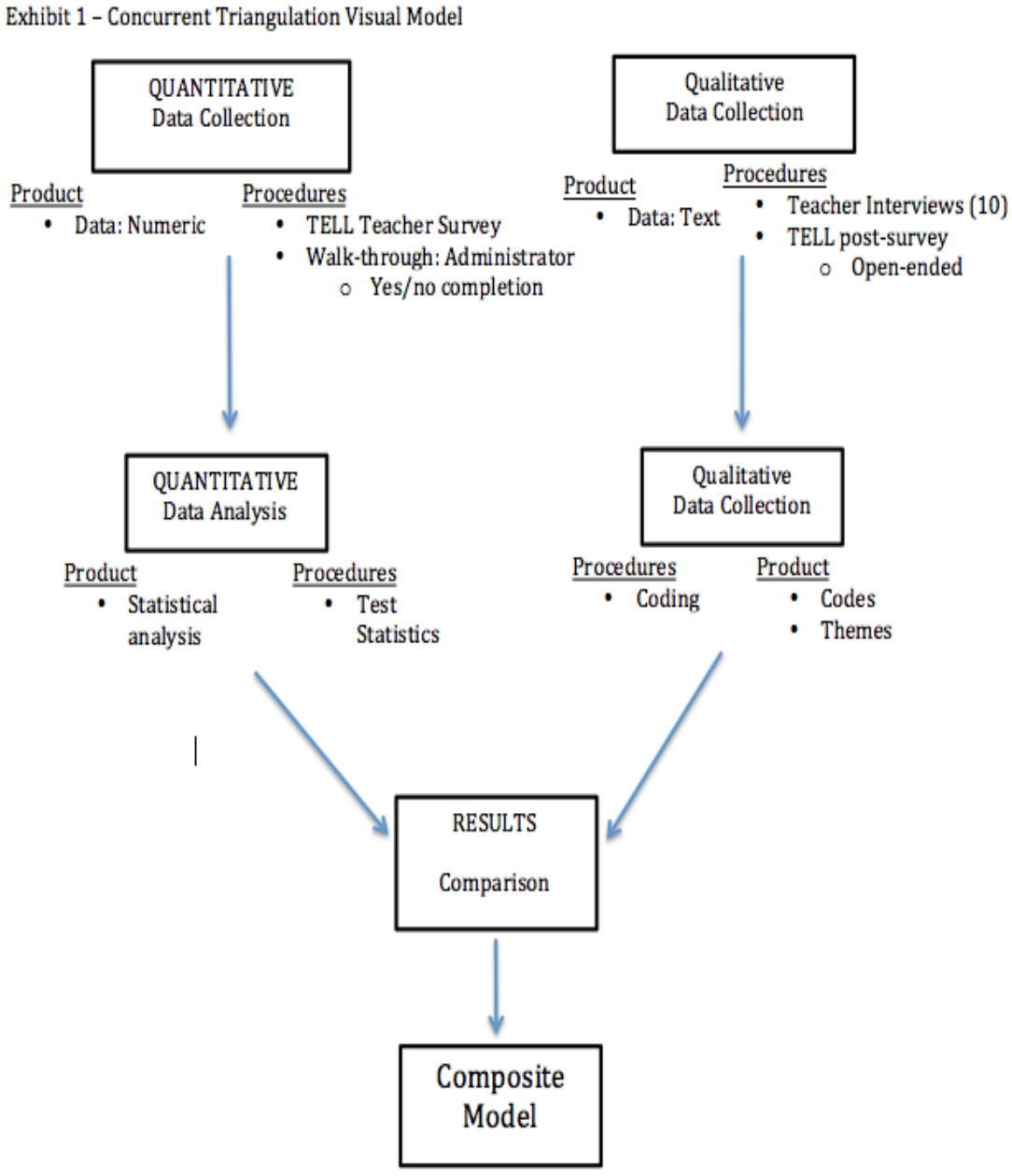

Figure 2. Concurrent triangulation visual model

Research Instrument

The TELL survey tool that was used was developed by a coalition aimed at improving instruction and has been used in Tennessee, Ohio, Kentucky, Maryland, and Colorado. TELL is an anonymous survey used to document teaching and learning conditions. Using the TELL survey, educators and researchers in these states have gained valuable documentation and insight of how educators view critical teaching and learning conditions. Permission to use and reproduce was granted (Appendix A). The TELL survey was selected to measure key attributes of teacher empowerment that were identified in the literature review: time to plan, collaborate, availability of instructional resources, leadership opportunities, and professional development.

The TELL survey validity and reliability were verified through external and internal analysis of structure and items as a part of the MET project supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Swanlund, 2011). The reliability analyses produce alpha coefficients ranging from 0.86 to 0.95 in the TELL Tennessee. The closer the alpha coefficient is to 1.00, the greater the internal consistency. An alpha -coefficient above 0.70 is considered acceptable (George & Mallery, 2003). The external and internal study confirmed the survey is capable of producing consistent data (George & Mallery, 2003; Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006; Swanlund, 2011).

The survey utilized a Likert scale. The core constructs of the survey were:

- Time – (seven sub-construct items) available time to plan, collaborate provide instruction, and eliminate barriers in order to maximize instructional time during the school day;

- Facilities and resources – (nine sub-construct items) availability to instructional, technology, office, communication, and school resources to teachers;
- Managing student conduct – (seven sub-construct items) policies and practices to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment;
- Teacher leadership – (eight sub-construct items) teacher involvement in decisions that impact classroom and school practices;
- School leadership actions – (12 sub-construct items) ability of school leadership to create trusting, supportive environments to enhance their teaching;
- Professional development – (13 sub-construct items) availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching; and
- Instructional practice and support – (nine sub-construct items) data and support available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning.

Teachers collected additional quantitative data monthly via in-house standards-based assessments in math and ELA. These assessments were administered each month and coded by teachers. State standards and student outcomes were documented and discussed at a monthly meeting with the building principal, assistant principal, and with each grade level teacher team and respective subject level (e.g. eighth grade math teacher, math data coach, math intervention teacher). These meetings were used to share re-teaching strategies, review student performance data on benchmark assessments, and identify instructional strategies for the upcoming unit. The assessments used by teachers were not analyzed in this study, but my observation of teachers and administrators who discussed this data were part of the study. Similarly, progress toward school turnaround was monitored by teachers and administrators according to the school's progress on

the ISTEP state standardized test and category placement on the state school accountability school grade card; however, the turnaround data were not monitored as a part of this study.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data from the walk-through notes, interviews, and reflective journal in this study were critical to maintain the data in an organized and in a timely manner (Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Yin, 2003). As outlined by Huberman and Miles (1984) a detailed procedure for qualitative analysis will include:

- Coding – organizing and theming data;
- Policing – detecting bias and preventing tangents;
- Dictating field notes – as opposed to verbatim recordings;
- Connoisseurship – researcher knowledge of issues and context of site;
- Progressive focusing and funneling – narrowing data and investigating technique as study progresses;
- Interim site summaries – narrative reviews of research progress
- Memoing – formal noting and sharing of emerging issues; and
- Outlining – standardized writing format.

During the outlining process, comparisons and contrasts of the results were utilized with the quantitative data analysis as depicted in the Concurrent Triangulation Model (Figure 2.). The research questions were aligned to specific survey and interview questions. The results of the quantitative and qualitative results could show convergence, inconsistency, or be complementary (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The thrust of the qualitative data was derived from the interviews. The six open-ended questions were designed to complement the survey by soliciting ideas about empowerment and

the walk-through process and were not as structured as survey items. Additionally, the survey had not specifically addressed walk-throughs. The final interview question provided an opportunity for teachers to share any information they wished. Data analysis began with open coding to disaggregate data into categories by examining similarities and differences. Structural and in vivo coding were used to extract the exact word or short phrase from the interview that the participants used to represent themes (Saldana, 2009) and separate the codes into categories (Creswell, 2013, Richard & Morse 2007; Saldana, 2009). I conducted all interviews. Since I, as the primary researcher, was an administrator in one of the secondary buildings, I did not interview any participant who was or would be evaluated by me.

All interviews were taped and transcribed literally from the recordings. I kept field notes during the interviews to collect anecdotal data when it occurred, so I did not have to rely on memory. Field notes were intended to supplement interview data (University of Southern California Libraries, 2016). Also, field notes were used to examine the social and emotional information gathered during the interviews (Saldana, 2009). The dissertation chair assisted me by reviewing my coding of the transcripts to lessen the potential for bias. Following the interviews, data were analyzed to identify themes and codes. The common concepts from the themes and codes were used to label these central ideas.

A second coding cycle was completed to reanalyze the first coding process. Axial coding was conducted to further develop and review data codes that were generated through the open coding process (Saldana 2009). As a result of the second coding, I identified a select list of the broader themes and codes into more refined conceptual categories (Richard & Morse, 2007; Saldana, 2009). Detailed memos, outlines, and field notes from my account were transcribed as

a part of the second coding process. Again, I collaborated with my dissertation chair to review data throughout the process prior to the writing of Chapter 4.

The results of the quantitative and qualitative results showed whether my data were convergent, inconsistent, or complementary (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). During the outlining process, comparisons and contrasts of the results were utilized with the quantitative data analysis as depicted in the Concurrent Triangulation Model. The results of the quantitative and qualitative were complimentary in nature. In other words, the qualitative data more completely identified the strengths of the quantitative data to validate the results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Statistics

The quantitative data in this exploratory study were categorical. As per Hoy's (2010) recommendations for statistical procedures and tests, I used descriptive and inferential statistics.

Descriptive statistics. Participants were asked to give the following information: years of teaching experience, years of experience in current building, subject taught, and learning log meeting participation. A univariate analysis was completed to describe the sample. The standard deviation for each construct for each sub group was reviewed. Sub-groups included experience ranges per subject area. For example, the means of survey data compared veteran teacher to new teachers, and English and math teachers to all other subject area teachers. The statistics used were frequencies, mean, and medians as mode of central tendencies. The range and standard deviation are measures of variability.

Inferential statistics. The pre-survey results were matched to the overall post-survey results after the implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative. The relationship of pre-post survey results was examined through a paired-samples *t* test using IBM's SPSS

predictive analysis software. I examined the overall data output for all participants and the subgroups cohorts; subject taught by teacher, years of service by the teacher, years of experience in current building, and participation in learning log meetings. The pre-post survey results of the seven core constructs (time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, teacher leadership, school leadership, professional development, and instructional practice and support) and the individual survey items of each of the seven constructs were examined in a paired samples *t* test to determine pre-post differences in two groups.

In addition, the paired-samples *t* test were completed on various teacher groups to determine if empowerment occurred more frequently in the English/math group compared to other teacher groups, since math and English teachers received additional walk-throughs. Conducting these analyses allowed for inferences to be made about the change in teacher empowerment after administrative walk-throughs occurred:

- *t* test,
- determine effect size using Cohen's *d*, and
- determine if results were a consequence of the independent variable or a result of chance.

Limitations

The survey success was dependent on teacher and administrator willingness to complete consent forms, participate in the post-survey, and the teachers' willingness to be interviewed. It is possible that some teachers who felt less empowered may not have wanted to participate in one or all of the exploratory study components. As the primary researcher and an administrator in one of the buildings, there was the potential for participant bias.

Summary

The findings of this study were expected to provide new perspectives on teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs in a high poverty school during a turnaround process. The composite mixed-method model research design provided overlapping quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data provided descriptive data of the teachers participating in the walk-through initiative. The ANOVA determined the difference in means of teachers who were participating in the walk-through initiative only compared to teachers who were participating in the walk-through imitative and collaborative learning log meetings. The qualitative data documented evidence of teacher empowerment attributes from teachers and administrators during the walk-through initiative. Chapter 4 provides the detailed analysis of the results.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the data analysis are presented. The data were collected and then analyzed in response to the questions proposed in this research. I hypothesized that teacher empowerment increased when administrators monitor instruction via walk-throughs. However, other new initiatives were being implemented with fidelity in these two schools. To more comprehensively gain information about the teachers' sense of empowerment, teachers provided information concerning these initiatives via a pre-/post- survey and teacher interviews. I organized this chapter by participant demographics, quantitative data, and qualitative survey results according to the guiding research questions.

Purpose of the Study

For this study I investigated how teachers perceive their level of empowerment based on the impact of administrative walk-throughs, evaluations, and other leadership actions of the administrators in their schools. The independent variables were the teachers' subject areas, participation or non-participation in learning log meetings, years of experience in the school, and total years of teaching experience. The dependent variables were teacher empowerment growth as measured by the construct scores and the total empowerment score on the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning (TELL) Survey comparing the scores from September 2014 until May 2015.

Research Questions

One central research question guided this study:

1. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?

Ancillary research questions were:

2. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for math and English teachers when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?
3. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for teachers who teach subjects other than math or English when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?
4. What aspects of **administrative walk-throughs** cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?
5. What aspects of the **teacher evaluation process** cause the teachers to feel more or less empowered?
6. What other **school leadership actions** cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?

The findings of this exploratory study are expected to provide new perspectives on teacher empowerment and administrative walk-throughs in high-poverty schools during a turnaround process.

Response Rate and Participant Demographics

Demographic information regarding the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study is discussed. First, the demographic information for the quantitative data including sample demographics and response rates were examined. Surveys were initially distributed to the 198 faculty members of the two secondary schools (middle school and high school) in the fall of 2014. Of the original 198 respondents, 87 participants completed both the pre-survey and post-

survey in the spring of 2015, which resulted in a response rate of 43.9% (*n* = 87). Participant demographics are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Respondent Demographics

Demographic	*n*	%
Years of Experience		
1 – 4 years	14	16%
5 – 12 years	30	35%
13+ years	43	49%
Years of Experience in Current Building		
1 – 4 years	36	41%
5 – 12 years	26	30%
13+ years	25	29%
Subject Area		
Math/English	50	58%
Science/Social Studies	17	19%
Other	20	23%
Participation in Learning Log Meetings		
Yes	57	66%
No	30	34%

Note. Information on gender was not collected in order to protect the anonymity of the respondents.

Participants were predominantly veteran teachers with 13 or more years of experience in education (49%, *n* = 43). The majority of the participants (41%, *n* = 36) had been in their current building for fewer than four years.

Participants identified their subject area by selecting one of three subject categories—math/English, science/social studies, or other subject areas. Math/English teachers represented 57% (*n* = 50), science/social studies accounted for 23% (*n* = 23), and teachers of other subject

areas represented 20% (n = 20) of the participant population. There were more than double the number of math/English teachers due the greater number of sections of these subjects provided at middle school and high school. Teachers were asked to identify whether or not they participated in learning log meetings, a periodic meeting to discuss data and instructional practice, as described in more detail in Chapter 3. Teacher participants responded that 66% (n = 57) were involved in learning log meetings.

The last question on the end-of-the-year TELL empowerment survey gave all participants the opportunity to provide an open-ended response about what administrative actions support their feeling of empowerment. Of the 87 participants, 27 submitted a response to the open-ended questions at the end of the survey. Of the 27 respondents, 16 taught math or English, two taught science or social studies, and 9 taught other subjects. Additionally, 19 (70%) of the respondents identified the administrative walk-through process as a positive contributing action to their sense of empowerment. However, since most of the responses were so brief, i.e. one or two words, I did not analyze the data as a part of the qualitative findings.

Additional qualitative data were gathered from interviews at the conclusion of the school year. Participants in the interviews were only eligible to participate if they completed the pre- and post-survey. Of the 87 that met the interview criteria, including the completion of a consent form, 14 teachers agreed to participate in the interview. Of the 14 interview candidates, 10 were selected to interview because they represented the desired diversity in experience and subject area taught. All 10 were contacted about participation, accepted the invitation, and each participant selected a time and place that was suitable to their needs.

Interviews were conducted with a total of 10 teachers from the high school and the middle school combined. Of the 10 completed interviews, three were math/English teachers, two

science/social studies teachers, and one teacher of other subjects from the high school. The remaining four interviews were conducted with teachers at the middle school—two math/English, one science/social studies, and one teacher of other subjects. Four (40%) of those who were interviewed had one to four years of experience, three had five to 12 years of experience, and three had more than 13 years of experience. The mean interview duration was 23.2 minutes with the shortest interview lasting 14.2 minutes and the longest interview lasting 32.6 minutes. Finally, data were obtained from interviews, which I transcribed into electronic format. The transcriptions excluded meaningless utterance such as "ah, uh, um," etc. In addition, I kept anecdotal notes during the interviews to identify themes and determine a need for follow-up questions.

All data from the open-ended responses, interviews, my field notes, and memos were coded in two cycles. The first cycle gave me an opportunity to review the data with an open mind and begin to link the data back to themes (Saldana, 2013). The open coding process included in vivo coding to capture participant voices and deepen the understanding of participant views. I continued first cycle coding with structural coding to identify broad themes and ideas through identifying short phrases and indexed the initial findings (Saldana, 2009). The dissertation chair reviewed my coding of transcripts and field notes to lessen the potential for bias.

The second coding cycle was utilized to reorganize and refine the data codes from the first cycle into categories and themes (Saldana, 2009). For the second coding cycle, I used axial coding to refine and reorganize codes into specific conceptual categories identified in the open coding process by rereading transcripts and memo notes (Richard & Morse, 2007; Saldana,

2009). These categories were created through the information gathered in the literature review. Once again, my dissertation chair reviewed the coding to reduce bias.

Data Analysis of Overall Empowerment Score

My research explored the teachers' perceptions of empowerment during a walk-through initiative. The TELL survey (Appendix B) was utilized to gather quantitative data. The nationally recognized survey designed to gather perceptions of empowerment based on teaching and learning conditions consisted of six core constructs—time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, teacher leadership, school leadership actions, professional development, and instructional practice. The majority of the TELL survey asked respondents to evaluate each statement using a Likert scale, wherein 1 = equaled *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*. Teachers were asked to complete the TELL survey in September 2014 near the beginning of the school year. Respondents were asked to label their survey with an anonymous identifier for future comparison. In June 2015, teachers completed the same survey with the same anonymous identifier. Only those teachers who completed both the pre- and post-survey were compared in this study.

It is important to note that the administrative walk-through initiative was the focus of the school, the schools' leadership, and this exploratory study. However, I could not control all variables or other factors of the school leadership action areas, such as the new evaluation tool and other school leadership actions. The survey had been designed in a way that made it impossible to specifically analyze walk-through data separately from other leadership actions. I felt this was an omission in the survey design and purposely added that separation of leadership actions during the interviews. The intent of the exploratory study was to better discern some of

those factors that influenced teacher empowerment during the school year in which a teacher walk-through was the primary school improvement initiative. Teacher empowerment was measured with a commercial instrument that separated empowerment into seven core constructs. Teacher interviews were conducted to glean additional insight about the survey results. For clarity, I titled the time frames as pre- and post-walk-through initiative, fully realizing that other school issues arose during the walk-through initiative.

My central research question stated, "What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?" In order to answer this first central research question, all Likert scale questions were summed to calculate an overall teacher empowerment score in SPSS. Pre-survey results prior to the start of the walk-through initiative and post-survey results after the final walk-throughs were completed were totaled (Table 9). Overall the comparison of pre-survey and post-survey results indicated an increase in empowerment scores. However, I did not know if those numerical differences in means were statistically significant until I completed inferential statistical analysis, described next.

Table 9

Overall Empowerment Likert Score Change for All Respondents

Variable	*N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-Test	87	221	345	282	36.7
Post-Test	87	225	365	292	39.8
Change		+4	+20	+10	+3.1

A paired-samples *t* test was used to compare the means of the overall empowerment survey (Table 10) to determine whether the mean difference between the paired observations were significantly different from zero. The post-survey results indicated a 10.06 increase (95% confidence interval [CI], 7.77 to 12.35) in teacher empowerment scores compared to the empowerment scores prior to the walk-through initiative. The statistical significance value was 0.000 ($p < .0005$). The teacher empowerment score elicited a statistically significant increase compared to the pre-survey score, $t(86) = 8.73$, $p < .05$. Teacher empowerment grew throughout the year as the walk-through initiative was occurring. Looking at the paired-samples *t* test, I thought it was important to not only report the statistical significance, but also the substantive significance via the effect size. I used a Cohen's *d* score of .2 as a small effect size, .5 as a medium effect size, and .8 as a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). The effect size for this analysis was found to exceed the Cohen's convention for a large effect size with a score of .94. These results indicated that most participants of the cohort experienced an increased sense of empowerment after the implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative.

Table 10

Overall Teacher Empowerment (Pre-Post) Paired Samples T Test

			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
10.06	10.75	1.15	7.77	12.35	8.73	86	.000	.94

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

Ancillary Question #1 stated, What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the TELL Survey) for math and English teachers when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?

The first ancillary research question focused on the change of teacher empowerment for teachers of math and English. Table 11 represents the overall pre-initiative survey empowerment Likert score and the post-initiative survey empowerment Likert score for teachers who taught math or English. I hypothesized the perception of empowerment increased for teachers of math and English since there were additional walkthroughs for these teachers. Additional walk-throughs were completed due to teacher invitation during additional contact via learning log meetings, and monthly departmental professional learning community (PLC) meetings.

Table 11

Overall Empowerment Likert Score and Change for Math/English Teachers

Variable	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test	50	222	342	272	34.8
Post-Test	50	225	365	283	38.7
Change		+3	+23	+11	+3.9

To be consistent, I used a paired-samples *t* test to compare the mean differences between the paired observations (Table 12). The results showed a mean score increase of 10.72 for math and English teachers' overall empowerment scores compared to the empowerment score prior to the walk-through initiative. The paired-samples *t* test score, $t(49) = 6.91$, $p < .05$, showed a statistically significant increase in the perception of empowerment compared to the pre-survey

teacher empowerment score for math and English teachers. Math and English teachers' sense of empowerment increased during the implementation of the walk-through initiative. When their increase was compared to all participants, the increase in the empowerment scores for math and English teachers was greater. These results illustrate that math and English teachers, who experienced additional walk-throughs, experienced a significant increased sense of empowerment during the school year.

Table 12

Overall Empowerment Score – Math/English Teachers Empowerment (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test Only

			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
10.72	10.97	1.55	7.60	13.84	6.91	49	.000	.98

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

During the next step of the analysis, I sought additional data disaggregation for math and English teachers who participated in periodic learning log meetings to compare that data with those teachers who did not participate in learning log meetings. Of the 50 math and English teachers, 44 of those teachers participated in learning log meetings and completed the pre- and post- empowerment survey. As evidenced in Tables 13 and 14, the increases in overall pre-post survey empowerment scores appear to be higher with those respondents who participated in learning log meetings.

Table 13

Overall Empowerment Likert Score and Change for Math/English Teachers Who Participated in Learning Log Meetings

Variable	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-Test	44	222	342	270	36.4
Post-Test	44	225	365	281	41.00
Change		+3	+23	+11	+3.9

Table 14

Overall Empowerment Likert Score and Change for Math/English Teachers Respondents Who Do Not Participate in Learning Log Meetings

Variable	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-Test	6	275	295	287	9.6
Post-Test	6	278	300	293	9.1
Change		+3	+5	+6	-0.5

To determine if there was a statistically significant increase in the perception of teacher empowerment in the pre-post survey for those math and English teachers who participated in learning log meetings and those who did not, I ran a paired-samples *t* test. The *t* test analysis for the pre-post initiative survey on both groups yielded a score that was statistically significant, $p < .000$ (Tables 15 and 16). In addition, when I reviewed the effect size for both teacher samples, I

found that both groups exceeded the Cohen's *d* convention for a large effect size. These results indicated that most participants of both cohorts experienced an increased sense of empowerment after the implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative regardless of learning log meeting participation.

Table 15

Math/English Teachers (Only) Who Participated in Learning Log Meetings Empowerment (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test

			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
11.57	11.42	1.72	8.10	15.04	6.72	43	.000	1.01

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

Table 16

Math/English Teachers (Only) Who Did Not Participate in Learning Log Meetings Empowerment (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test

			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
5.50	2.42	0.99	2.95	8.05	5.55	5	.003	2.27

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

Ancillary Question #2 asked, What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the TELL Survey) for other teachers (who taught subjects other than math, English, science, social studies) when administrators implemented a formal walk-through initiative? In order to answer Ancillary Question 2, the same overall pre-initiative survey empowerment Likert score and the post-initiative survey empowerment Likert score mean for all other teachers (excluding math and English teachers) is shown in Table 17. The overall pre-initiative empowerment score was greater for teachers who did not teach math or English, 299 compared to 272 respectively. However, empowerment surveys given post walk-through initiative revealed math and English teachers empowerment Likert mean scores increased 11 points compared to the five point mean increase for teachers who did not teach math or English.

Table 17

Overall Empowerment Likert Score Change for All Subjects Except Math/English Teacher Respondents

Variable	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-Test	37	234	347	299	33.9
Post-Test	37	234	358	304	38.6
Change		0	+11	+5	+4.7

Again, to elicit analogous results, I used SPSS to compare the mean differences between the paired observations with a paired-samples *t* test (Table 18). The results showed a mean increase of 4.89 for non-math and English teachers overall Likert teacher empowerment score compared to the empowerment score prior to the walk-through initiative. The teacher

empowerment score produced a statistical significant increase compared to the pre-survey score, $t(36) = 4.42$, $p < .05$, which implied that teachers who taught subjects other than math and English experienced an increased sense of empowerment during administrative walk-through initiative similar to math and English teachers. However, when comparing the effect size of two cohorts, math/English teachers and teachers of all subjects, there was a difference. Teachers who did not teach math or English had a Cohen's *d* effect size score within the medium effect size (*d* = .73) and math and English teachers had a large effect size score (*d* = .98).

Table 18

Overall Empowerment Score for Teachers of All Subjects Excluding Math/English Teachers (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test

			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
4.89	6.73	1.11	2.65	7.14	4.42	36	.000	.73

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

After noting the differences between subject areas taught, I thought it was important to compare other independent variables. Table 19 illustrates an increase in mean scores in all levels of experience. For the purpose of this study, I identified teachers with 1 to 4 years of experience as novice, teachers with five to 12 years of experience as experienced, and those with 13+ years of experience as veteran teachers. However, I did not know if the data in Table 19 represented statistical differences until I conducted the inferential statistics below.

Table 19

Overall Empowerment Likert Score Change for Independent Variable – Years of Experience

Independent Variable	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-4 Years of Experience					
Pre-Test	18	224	345	291	38.3
Post-Test	18	240	358	303	39.0
Change		+16	+13	+12	+.7
5-12 Years of Experience					
Pre-Test	32	223	345	282	38.5
Post-Test	32	225	353	291	40.7
Change		+2	+8	+9	+2.2
13+ Years of Experience					
Pre-Test	37	221	341	279	36.5
Post-Test	37	229	365	289	41.8
Change		+8	+24	+10	+5.3

To determine if the increase in the TELL empowerment survey was statistically significant, I ran a paired-samples *t* test for each of the years of experience categories and compared those results to the results of the overall teacher empowerment score pair-sample *t* test (Table 10). The post administrative walk-through initiative survey yielded a statistically significant mean increase in the overall teacher empowerment score in each experience category as displayed in Table 20. The effect size for all three experience level categories exceeded Cohen's large effect size ($d = .8$). Based on the effect size, all experience level categories showed an increased self-perception of empowerment following the administrative walk-through initiative.

Table 20

Overall Empowerment Change for Independent Variable Years of Experience (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test

Independent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
				Lower	Upper				
1 – 4 years	12.50	11.02	2.95	6.14	18.86	4.24	17	.001	1.13
5 – 12 years	9.34	8.61	1.52	6.24	12.44	6.13	31	.000	1.08
13+ years	9.76	10.35	1.70	6.30	13.20	5.73	36	.000	.94

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

After reviewing the results for the independent variable, years of experience, I examined years of experience in teachers' current building categories to determine if there was a difference in the mean empowerment score before and after the walk-through initiative. To do so, I analyzed the descriptive statistic data through SPSS (Table 21) and compared the results to the overall teacher empowerment Likert score (Table 9). Each of the years of experience in current building categories elicited increases in the post-initiative mean score as well as the post-initiative minimum and maximum. These numbers suggested an increased sense of teachers' perception of empowerment at the end of the school year. The 10-point increase in the teacher empowerment score for the one to four and 13+ years of experience in current building groups was the same as the overall teacher empowerment score, but the eight-point increase in the mean for the five to 12 years of experience in current building was less.

Table 21

Overall Empowerment Likert Score Change for Independent Variable, Years of Experience, in Current Building

Years of Experience in Current Building	*n*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-4 Years					
Pre-Test	36	221	345	278	37.4
Post-Test	36	229	358	288	39.1
Change		+8	+13	+10	+1.7
5-12 Years					
Pre-Test	26	223	345	277	37.8
Post-Test	26	225	352	285	39.1
Change		+2	+7	+8	+1.3
13+					
Pre-Test	25	235	341	293	33.2
Post-Test	25	237	365	303	40.7
Change		+2	+24	+10	+7.5

By completing a paired-samples *t* test, I was able to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship as suggested by the descriptive statistics. Table 22 illustrated the teacher empowerment score pre-post walk-through initiative for all three categories of experience in their current building showed a statistically significant increase in the mean score. As I compared the effect size for the three experience categories, I noticed that all scores exceeded Cohen's large effect size ($d = .8$). These results signified that all experience categories demonstrated an increased sense of empowerment following the administrative walk-through initiative.

Table 22

Overall Empowerment Change for Independent Variable, Years of Experience in Current Building, Paired (Pre-Post) Samples T Test

Independent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
1 – 4 years	10.86	9.76	1.63	7.56	14.16	6.68	35	.000	1.11
5 – 12 years	7.88	8.86	1.74	4.30	11.46	4.54	25	.000	.89
13+ years	10.36	10.29	2.06	6.11	14.61	5.04	24	.000	1.01

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen *d* (Cohen, 1988).

Data Analysis of Core Constructs

The survey used by the district provided additional information, which could be analyzed by core constructs. These core constructs provided some foundational information, which could identify the actions that increased a teachers' sense of empowerment. The core constructs from the survey included time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, teacher leadership opportunities, school leadership, professional development opportunities, and instructional practice.

I understood that more focused data for Ancillary Research Questions 4 through 6 would be obtained through interviews. For example, the survey itself did not identify what specific aspects of the administrative walk-throughs, teacher evaluation tool, or other school leadership actions increased their sense of empowerment. However, these core constructs illustrated some

broad ideas that could be learned from this archival survey data. For the purpose of this study, administrative walk-throughs, the teacher evaluation tool, and other leadership action were considered separate categories. Other leadership actions included teacher leadership opportunities, access to facilities and resources, use of school time, managing student conduct, and professional development opportunities.

To support the analysis, I grouped each Likert scale question into the appropriate core construct. Each subgroup of questions was totaled and a mean score was produced for each construct. Since each core construct had a varying number of questions, I decided to compare the mean score instead of the core construct total score in order to have a consistent numerical output for each core construct.

Using SPSS, the seven individual core constructs mean scores, standard deviations, and the standard error of mean were calculated for pre walk-through initiative and post walk-through initiative (Table 23). The pre-and post-survey results for all participants indicated an increase in empowerment mean scores for each of the core constructs. The facility and resources core construct produced the smallest increase with a .03. In contrast, school leadership actions had the greatest increase in pre-post mean scores with a .18 gain. The other core constructs are shown in Table 23.

Table 23

TELL Core Construct Pre-Post Mean Score Comparison for All Participants

TELL Core Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Time			
Pre-Survey	3.08	.67	.07
Post-Survey	3.15	.72	.08
Difference	+.07		
Facilities and Resources			
Pre-Survey	3.27	.71	.08
Post-Survey	3.30	.72	.08
Difference	+.03		
Managing Student Conduct			
Pre-Survey	3.31	.55	.06
Post-Survey	3.37	.63	.07
Difference	+.06		
Teacher Leadership Opportunities			
Pre-Survey	3.27	.68	.07
Post-Survey	3.37	.76	.08
Difference	+.10		
School Leadership Actions			
Pre-Survey	3.24	.58	.06
Post-Survey	3.42	.62	.07
Difference	+.18		
Professional Development			
Pre-Survey	3.03	.50	.05
Post-Survey	3.10	.55	.06
Difference	+.07		
Instructional Practice			
Pre-Survey	3.57	.55	.06
Post-Survey	3.68	.53	.06
Difference	+.11		

Note. (n = 87)

A paired-samples *t* test was used to compare the means of the overall empowerment survey (Table 24) to determine whether the mean difference between the paired observations was significantly different from zero. The post-survey results indicated that all core constructs were statistically significant ($p < .05$). The teachers' feeling of empowerment grew for each core construct throughout the year. The paired-sample *t* test data indicated that all core constructs had a positive impact in teacher empowerment. However, to better quantify the size of the differences, I calculated the effect size with Cohen's *d* score calculation for each core construct.

The effect sizes varied for the individual core constructs (Table 24). The core constructs of managing student conduct, time, facilities and resources, leadership opportunities, and decisions with instructional practices were found to have scores in the small effect category ($d = .2$) with scores of .25, .26, .31, .42 and .47 respectively. The professional development opportunities and school leadership actions core construct score of .57 and .76 fell within the medium effect size range. With a Cohen *d* score of .76, the school leadership actions core construct nearly scored in the large effect range ($d =. 8$). Although the paired-samples *t* test showed that all core constructs were statistically significant, the Cohen's *d* score indicated the core constructs of school leadership actions had the largest effect size on teacher empowerment for all participants. Within the core constructs, survey items about the evaluation procedures and other leadership actions had the lowest mean scores. In contrast, the core construct of school leadership actions (which included survey items such as school leadership consistently supports teachers, there is an atmosphere of trust and support, teachers are held to high professional standards for the delivery or instruction, school leadership facilitates the use of data to improve student learning, and teacher receives feedback that can improve teaching) had the highest mean scores.

Table 24

Overall Empowerment Change for Core Constructs Mean Score (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test

				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Independent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
Time	.07	.23	.02	.02	.12	2.92	86	.004	.31
Facilities and Resources	.03	.11	.01	.01	.05	2.43	86	.017	.26
Managing Student Conduct	.06	.23	.02	.01	.10	2.32	86	.023	.25
Teacher Leadership Opportunities	.11	.25	.03	.05	.16	3.92	86	.000	.42
School Leadership Actions	.18	.24	.03	.13	.23	7.07	86	.000	.76
Decisions with Instructional Practices	.12	.20	.02	.07	.16	5.30	86	.000	.47
Professional Development Opportunities	.07	.15	.02	.04	10	4.34	86	.000	.57

I initially hypothesized that the perception of empowerment increased for teachers of math and English since they experienced additional walk-throughs. The data were analyzed for

this teacher subgroup to look at broad ideas within the seven core constructs of the empowerment survey. Table 25 lists the changes in core construct mean scores for math and English teachers. All seven core constructs showed an increase in pre-post mean score comparisons. As with the mean scores for all participants, the increase in the facilities and resources and managing student conduct mean scores displayed the smallest increases, and school leadership actions had the greatest increase in teacher empowerment scores. To determine if these results were statistically and substantially significant, I ran a paired-samples *t* test and then identified the effect sizes via a Cohen's *d* score.

Table 25

TELL Core construct Pre-Post Mean Score Comparison for Math/English Teachers

TELL Core Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Time			
Pre-Survey	2.92	.62	.09
Post-Survey	3.03	.67	.09
Difference	+.11		
Facilities and Resources			
Pre-Survey	3.07	.72	.10
Post-Survey	3.10	.71	.10
Difference	+.03		
Managing Student Conduct			
Pre-Survey	3.20	.52	.07
Post-Survey	3.25	.59	.08
Difference	+.05		
Teacher Leadership Opportunities			
Pre-Survey	3.09	.66	.09
Post-Survey	3.23	.75	.11
Difference	+.14		
School Leadership Actions			
Pre-Survey	3.02	.52	.07
Post-Survey	3.37	.66	.09
Difference	+.35		
Professional Development			
Pre-Survey	2.93	.50	.07
Post-Survey	3.00	.56	.07
Difference	+.07		

Table 25 (continued)

TELL Core Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Instructional Practice			
Pre-Survey	3.59	.55	.07
Post-Survey	3.71	.53	.07
Difference	+.12		

Note. (n = 50)

The paired-sample *t* test on pre-post survey results (Table 26) indicated that most, but not all, core constructs had a statistically significant impact on teacher empowerment. The mean score increased from pre-walk-through initiative survey compared to post-walk-through survey for facilities and resources and managing student conduct were not statistically significant. These results illustrated that these two core constructs did not impact a teacher's sense of empowerment. The remaining five core constructs displayed statistically significant results. After reviewing these results, I calculated the Cohen's *d* score for each core construct (Table 26) to quantify the size of the effect.

The core constructs of time and professional development opportunities fell just below the Cohen's *d* .5 threshold of the medium effect size with scores of .42 and .46. Decisions with instructional practices and teacher leadership opportunities core constructs fell within the medium effect size with Cohen's *d* scores of .58 and .63. Unlike the results of all participants, the core construct of school leadership actions surpassed the minimum large effect size threshold (d = .8) with a .82 Cohen's *d* score. These results indicated that math and English teachers experienced an increased sense of empowerment during this school year. Compared to the results of all teachers, math and English teachers displayed a greater feeling of empowerment post walk-through initiative.

The paired-samples *t* test illustrated the core constructs of time, teacher leadership opportunities, professional development opportunities, decision with instructional practices, and school leadership actions were statistically significant per the paired-samples *t* test. The Cohen's *d* score gave additional clarity to the effect size of these five constructs. The scores indicated that although all five core constructs had at least a medium impact on increasing teacher empowerment, the core construct of school leadership actions had the largest impact on increasing math and English teachers feeling of empowerment. Similar to the results for all participants, other leadership actions were found to be statically non-significant on feelings of empowerment. In contrast, the attributes of the walk-through process identified in Chapter 2 had the highest individual survey item construct mean score. These attributes included survey items such as:

- school leadership consistently supports teachers,
- there is an atmosphere of trust and support,
- teachers are held to high professional standards for the delivery or instruction,
- school leadership facilitates the use of data to improve student learning, and
- teacher receives feedback that can improve teaching.

Table 26

Overall Empowerment Change in Core Constructs Mean Score for Math and English Teachers (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test and Cohen's d Score

				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Independent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
Time	.11	.26	.04	.03	.18	2.90	49	.006	0.42
Facilities and Resources	.03	.12	.02	.00	.06	1.73	49	.091	0.25
Managing Student Conduct	.06	.21	.03	.00	.11	1.87	49	.068	0.29
Teacher Leadership Opportunities	.15	.24	.03	.08	.21	4.20	49	.000	0.63
School Leadership Actions	.23	.28	.04	.15	.31	5.84	49	.000	0.82
Decisions with Instructional Practices	.14	.24	.03	.08	.21	4.28	49	.000	0.58
Professional Development Opportunities	.06	.13	.02	.02	.09	3.16	49	.003	0.46

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988).

In comparison to the teachers of math and English, the change in the mean scores for the individual core constructs for teachers of all other subjects were analyzed. Teachers for all other

subjects received fewer administrative walk-throughs when compared to math and English teachers. Non-math and English teachers averaged an administrative walk-through on a bi-weekly basis. Table 27 lists the changes in core construct scores for teachers of non-math and English. All seven core constructs showed an increase in pre-post mean score comparison. However, school leadership actions core construct had a smaller increase for non-math and English when compared to all participants, and also when compared to math and English teachers. To maintain consistency, I ran a paired-samples *t* tests and identified the effect sizes via a Cohen's *d* score to determine if these results were statistically and substantially significant.

Table 27

TELL Core Construct Pre-Post Mean Score Comparison for Teachers of All Subjects Excluding Math and English Teachers

TELL Core Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Time			
Pre-Survey	3.29	.69	.11
Post-Survey	3.31	.77	.13
Difference	+.02		
Facilities and Resources			
Pre-Survey	3.53	.62	.10
Post-Survey	3.56	.65	.11
Difference	+.03		
Managing Student Conduct			
Pre-Survey	3.47	.56	.09
Post-Survey	3.53	.66	.11
Difference	+.06		
Teacher Leadership Opportunities			
Pre-Survey	3.51	.62	.10
Post-Survey	3.57	.73	.12
Difference	+.06		

Table 27 (continued)

TELL Core Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean
School Leadership Actions			
Pre-Survey	3.55	.53	.09
Post-Survey	3.67	.60	.10
Difference	+.12		
Professional Development			
Pre-Survey	3.21	.47	.08
Post-Survey	3.30	.54	.09
Difference	+.09		
Instructional Practice			
Pre-Survey	3.60	.56	.09
Post-Survey	3.67	.58	.09
Difference	+.07		

Note. (n = 37)

Table 28 represents the paired sample t test for all teachers excluding math and English. These results showed that time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, and teacher leadership opportunities constructs did not impact a teacher's sense of empowerment. The remaining three core constructs of school leadership actions, decisions with instructional practices, and professional development opportunities displayed statistically significant results. Following this test, I calculated the Cohen's d score for each core construct (Table 28) to determine the effect size. Professional development core constructs fell just below the medium effect size (.5) with Cohen's d scores of .47. School leadership actions and decisions with instructional practices fell just below the large effect size threshold (d = .8) with scores of .75 and .71 respectively.

Table 28

Overall Empowerment Change in Core Constructs Mean Score for Teachers of All Subjects Excluding Math and English Teacher (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test and Cohen's d Score

				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Independent Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation.	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Effect Size
Time	.03	.18	.03	-.03	.09	.91	36	.369	0.17
Facilities and Resources	.03	.09	.02	.00	.06	1.78	36	.083	0.33
Managing Student Conduct	.05	.25	.04	-.03	.14	1.40	36	.170	0.20
Teacher Leadership Opportunities	.05	.26	.04	-.03	.14	1.28	36	.209	0.19
School Leadership Actions	.12	.16	.03	.06	.17	4.50	36	.000	0.75
Decisions with Instructional Practices	.08	.113	.02	.03	.12	3.50	36	.001	0.71
Professional Development Opportunities	.08	.17	.03	.03	.14	3.00	36	.005	0.47

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988).

The paired-samples *t* test illustrated that four core constructs, time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, and teacher leadership opportunities were not statistically

significant. The constructs with statistically significant results indicated that attributes of other leadership actions (i.e. for this study, those action not associated with the walk-through or evaluation process) had the least impact on teacher empowerment. The core constructs of professional development opportunities, decision with instructional practices, and school leadership actions were statistically significant per the paired-samples *t* test. The Cohen's *d* score gave additional clarity to the effect size of these three core constructs, which resulted in at least a medium impact on increasing teacher empowerment. The core construct of school leadership actions had the largest impact on increasing all teachers, excluding math and English teachers, feelings of empowerment. Specifically, survey items such as school leadership consistently supported teachers, there is an atmosphere of trust and support, teachers are held to high professional standards for the delivery or instruction, school leadership facilitates the use of data to improve student learning, and teacher receives feedback that can improve teaching had the highest mean scores had the highest individual survey item construct mean scores.

Again, understanding the survey did not specifically address the school initiatives, to further disaggregate the data and provide clarity on empowerment attributes, I looked at those teachers who participated in learning log meetings (LLM). Teachers who participated in LLMs had additional walk-throughs as math or English teachers and had additional opportunities for professional conversations about instructional practice and student data. Table 29 shows the change in core construct mean scores for those who did (yes) and did not (no) participate in LLMs. The pre-survey and post-survey results for LLM participation indicated an increase in empowerment mean scores for all participants and each core constructs, except for facilities and resources for those teachers who did not participate in LLMs. For those who participated in LLMs, the facility and resources core construct produced the smallest increase with a .06

increase in mean score. In contrast, school leadership actions construct had the greatest increase in pre-post mean score. To elicit uniformity in data, these results were run through the paired-samples *t* test and the Cohen's *d* test for effect size to determine if the results were numerically significant.

Table 29

TELL Core Construct Pre-Post Mean Score Comparison Independent Variable – Learning Log Meeting Participation

	Mean	
Participation in Learning Log Meetings	Yes (n = 57)	No (n = 30)
TELL Core Constructs		
Time		
Pre-Survey	3.02	3.18
Post-Survey	3.12	3.21
Difference	+.10	+.03
Facilities and Resources		
Pre-Survey	3.27	3.26
Post-Survey	3.32	3.25
Difference	+.05	-.01
Managing Student Conduct		
Pre-Survey	3.30	3.34
Post-Survey	3.36	3.38
Difference	+.06	+.04
Teacher Leadership		
Pre-Survey	3.16	3.46
Post-Survey	3.30	3.52
Difference	+.14	+.06
School Leadership		
Pre-Survey	3.14	3.44
Post-Survey	3.37	3.54
Difference	+.27	+.10

Table 29 (continued)

	Mean	
Participation in Learning Log Meetings	Yes (*n* = 57)	No (*n* = 30)
Professional Development		
Pre-Survey	2.92	3.24
Post-Survey	3.00	3.30
Difference	+.08	+.06
Instructional Practice		
Pre-Survey	3.59	3.52
Post-Survey	3.71	3.61
Difference	+.12	+.09

Note. (n = 87)

The side-by-side comparison of the paired-samples *t* test results in Table 30 shows that all seven core constructs had a statistically significant increase in mean scores for all teachers who participated in LLMs (yes). In contrast, those teachers who did not participate in LLMs (no) only displayed a statistically significant increase in mean scores for the core constructs of school leadership actions, decisions with instructional practices, and professional development opportunities. To determine the effect size for the core constructs, I calculated the Cohen's *d* score.

For those teachers who did not participate in LLMs, the paired-samples *t* test illustrated the core constructs of professional development opportunities, decision with instructional practices, and school leadership actions were statistically significant and the effect size score supported these results. The core construct of school leadership actions had the largest effect size Cohen's *d* score for teacher empowerment. More precisely, survey items within the school leadership actions construct that are associated with the administrative walk-through initiative

displayed the highest mean score for those teachers who do not participate in LLMs experienced increased feeling of empowerment.

These data illustrate that attributes of other leadership actions had the smallest effect on teacher empowerment. For this study, other leadership actions included teacher leadership opportunities, access to facilities and resources, use of school time, managing student conduct, and professional development opportunities. Comparable to all participants and identified independent groups, the school leadership actions core construct experienced the greatest change in score and had the largest effect on teacher empowerment. School leadership actions scored in the large effect size category (d = .8) with a score of .85. Within the core construct of school leadership actions, the evaluation process had the lowest mean score. In addition, survey items addressing leadership actions, other than those associated with the walk-through process, had the next lowest mean score. The characteristics of the walk-through initiative included in the survey items with school leadership actions had the highest mean score.

Table 30

Comparison of Overall Empowerment Change for Core Constructs for Independent Variable Learning Log Meeting Participation (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test and Cohen's d Score

Participation in LLMs	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* score	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
	Yes				No			
Time	2.70	56	.009	.35	1.16	29	.257	.19
Facilities and Resources	3.02	56	.004	.42	-.53	29	.601	-.13
Managing Student Conduct	2.31	56	.025	.32	.78	29	.440	.13

Table 30 (continued)

Participation in LLMs	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* score	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
	Yes				No			
Participation in LLMs	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* score	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
Teacher Leadership Opportunities	4.37	56	.000	.57	1.04	29	.306	.17
School Leadership Actions	6.48	56	.000	.85	3.42	29	.002	.67
Decisions with Instructional Practices	4.26	56	.000	.57	3.47	29	.002	.64
Professional Development Opportunities	3.52	56	.001	.44	2.61	29	.014	.50

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988).

Since there were differences in the survey data among other independent variables, I compared the change in pre-post initiative mean scores for the three years of teachers' experience categories: 1 to 4, five to 12, and 13+. For this study I identified those who had 1 to 4 years of teaching experience as novice, five to 12 years as experienced, and those who had 13+ years as veteran. Table 31 lists the individual core construct mean score prior to the walk-through initiative and following the walk-through initiative. The pre-survey's post-survey results for teaching experience showed an increase in empowerment mean scores for all three

experience categories in each of the seven core constructs. Like the other independent variable groups, facilities and resources construct displayed the smallest increase in pre-post construct mean score. The school leader actions core construct produced the largest mean score increase for all three experience categories. To obtain the statistical significance of the initial data findings, I ran the data through the paired-samples *t* test and the Cohen's *d* test for effect size.

Table 31

Tell Core Construct Pre-Post Mean Score Comparison of Independent Variable, Years of Experience

Independent Variable	Mean		
	1 to 4 Years Novice	5 to 12 Years Experienced	13+ Years Veteran
Years of Experience	(*n* = 14)	(*n* = 30)	(*n* = 43)
TELL Core Constructs			
Time			
Pre-Survey	3.31	3.24	2.88
Post-Survey	3.36	3.33	2.96
Difference	+.05	+.09	+.08
Facilities and Resources			
Pre-Survey	3.48	3.34	3.15
Post-Survey	3.52	3.37	3.17
Difference	+.04	+.03	+.02
Managing Student Conduct			
Pre-Survey	3.24	3.40	3.27
Post-Survey	3.30	3.47	3.32
Difference	+.06	+.07	+.-05
Teacher Leadership Opportunities			
Pre-Survey	3.42	3.32	3.18
Post-Survey	3.57	3.45	3.25
Difference	+.15	+.13	+.07

Table 31 (continued)

Independent Variable	Mean		
	1 to 4 Years Novice	5 to 12 Years Experienced	13+ Years Veteran
Years of Experience	(*n* = 14)	(*n* = 30)	(*n* = 43)
School Leadership Actions			
Pre-Survey	3.40	3.26	3.18
Post-Survey	3.70	3.41	3.35
Difference	+.14	+.06	+.06
Professional Development			
Pre-Survey	3.21	3.04	2.97
Post-Survey	3.35	3.10	3.03
Difference	+.14	+.06	+.06
Instructional Practice			
Pre-Survey	3.77	3.46	3.57
Post-Survey	3.89	3.56	3.70
Difference	+.12	+.10	+.13

Note. (*n* = 87)

Table 32 represents the paired-*t* test and Cohen's *d* scores results for all three years of experience categories for all core constructs. For all three experience groupings, the constructs of time, facilities and resources, and managing student conduct did not display statistical significance in mean scores. Conversely, the two core constructs displaying statistical significant for all three experience categories were school leadership actions and professional development opportunities. In other words teachers, regardless of their years of teaching experience, indicated an increased sense of empowerment as it related to school leadership actions and professional development opportunities. The core construct decisions with instructional practices displayed a statistically significant score for those teachers with five to 12 and 13+ years of experience.

Novice teachers produced a statistical score on the Rosnar (2005) recommended threshold ($p < .05$) of significance for decision with instructional practice; therefore, it was particularly important to review the Cohen's *d* score for effect size.

In an effort to quantify the substantive differences in the pre-post initiative survey, I calculated the Cohen's *d* score for all three years of experience categories. For teachers with 13+ years of experience, the core constructs of teacher leadership opportunities and professional development opportunities were found to have a small effect on teacher empowerment. Even though the paired-samples *t* test score of 13+ years of experience for professional development opportunities were statistically significant, the Cohen's *d* score for effective size fell within the small effect size. All other core constructs fell within the medium ($d = .5$) to large effect size ($d = .8$). Similar to all participants and identified independent groups, school leadership actions core construct experienced the greatest change in score and had the highest effect size score. School leadership actions scored in the large effect size category with a score of 1.20 for one to four years of experience and .68 for the five to 12 and 13+ years of experience categories. More explicitly, the empowerment survey items of teachers are held to high professional standards for the delivery or instruction, school leadership facilitates the use of data to improve student learning, and teachers receive feedback that can improve teaching had the highest individual survey item construct mean scores.

Table 32

Comparison of Overall Empowerment Change for Core Constructs for Independent Variable Years of Experience (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test and Cohen's d Score

Years of Experience	1 - 4 Years (n = 14)			5 - 12 Years (n = 30)			13+ Years (n = 43)		
Independent Variable	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
Time	.89	.389	0.24	2.52	.017	0.44	1.76	.086	0.26
Facilities and Resources	1.31	.212	0.36	1.85	.071	0.30	1.12	.267	0.18
Managing Student Conduct	.77	.458	0.21	1.97	.059	0.35	1.28	.208	0.18
Teacher Leadership Opportunities	2.52	.026	0.65	3.10	.004	0.57	1.80	.081	0.28
School Leadership Actions	4.84	.001	1.20	3.70	.001	0.68	4.50	.000	0.68
Decisions with Instructional Practices	2.12	.050	0.57	3.32	.002	0.63	3.62	.001	0.57
Professional Development Opportunities	2.32	.037	0.64	3.45	.002	0.67	2.38	.022	0.36

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988).

After reviewing the empowerment survey results for years of experience in teaching, I wanted to determine if there were differences in the teachers' sense of empowerment for the individual core constructs in pre-post initiative mean scores for the three different years of experience in current building categories. Table 33 lists the change in pre-post walk-through survey mean score for the individual core constructs in the three years of experience in current building categories one to four, five to 12, and 13+. The pre-survey post-survey results for teaching experience showed an increase in empowerment mean scores for all three experience categories in each of the seven core constructs.

Like many of the other independent variable groups, the school leader actions core construct produced the largest mean score increase for one to four years and 13+ years of experience in current building teacher group. I ran the data through the paired-samples *t* test and the Cohen's *d* test for effect size to determine statistical and substantial significance.

Table 33

TELL Core Construct Pre-Post Mean Score Comparison Independent Variable – Years of Experience in Current Building

Independent Variable	Mean		
	1-4	5-12	13+
Years of Experience in Current Building	(*n* = 36)	(*n* = 26)	(*n* = 25)
TELL Core Constructs			
Time			
Pre-Survey	3.07	3.08	3.08
Post-Survey	3.15	3.16	3.13
Difference	+.08	+.08	+.05
Facilities and Resources			
Pre-Survey	3.22	3.12	3.49
Post-Survey	3.27	3.13	3.51
Difference	+.05	+.01	+.02

Table 33 (continued)

Independent Variable	Mean		
	1-4	5-12	13+
Years of Experience in Current Building	(*n* = 36)	(*n* = 26)	(*n* = 25)
Managing Student Conduct			
Pre-Survey	3.28	3.25	3.43
Post-Survey	3.31	3.27	3.55
Difference	+.03	+.02	+.08
Teacher Leadership Opportunities			
Pre-Survey	3.16	3.30	3.39
Post-Survey	3.28	3.41	3.46
Difference	+.12	+.11	+.07
School Leadership Actions			
Pre-Survey	3.19	3.25	3.32
Post-Survey	3.42	3.34	3.52
Difference	+.23	+.09	+.20
Professional Development			
Pre-Survey	3.09	2.91	3.08
Post-Survey	3.18	2.96	3.14
Difference	+.09	+.05	+.06
Instructional Practice			
Pre-Survey	3.50	3.43	3.79
Post-Survey	3.66	3.52	3.88
Difference	+.16	+.09	+.09

Note. (*n* = 87)

A summary of completed paired-samples *t* test and the Cohen's *d* score for the three years of experience in current building categories are represented in Table 34. There was not one core construct that did not show statistical significance for at least one of the years of experience categories. The construct of time was not statistically significant for one to four or 13+ years of experience in current building, but was significant for the five to 12 years of experience in building category. Teachers with one to four and five to 12 years of experience in

current building did not have a statistically significant change in the core construct of managing student conduct, but teachers with 13+ years of experience in current building did. The facilities and resources construct did not display statistical significance for five to 12 and 13+ years of experience in current building. In addition, teachers with 13+ years of experience in current building did have a statistically significant score change in core constructs of teacher leadership opportunities or decisions with instructional practices.

Teacher leadership opportunities and decisions with instructional practices for one to four and five to 12 years of experience categories were found to have a statistically significant mean score increase in the pre-post initiative survey. The only core constructs that displayed statistical significance changes in mean scores for all three experience categories were school leadership actions and professional development opportunities. After identifying the core constructs with statistically significant changes, I calculated the Cohen's *d* score for all three categories and seven core constructs in an effort to quantify the substantive difference in the pre-post initiative survey. This data illustrates that attributes of other leadership actions, such as facilitating professional development, usage of time, managing student conduct, and providing resources had the lesser effect on teacher empowerment.

An unexpected result was that teachers with one to four years of experience in current building had a score within the Cohen's *d* large effect size category ($d = .8$) for decision with instructional practices. However, once I reviewed the individual items of the core construct, the three highest scoring questions were associated with the administrative walk-through initiative. The three survey items were teachers use assessment data to inform instructional decisions, curriculum is aligned with state standards, and teachers are encouraged to try new things to improve instruction.

The Cohen's *d* score for quantifying the effectiveness intervention supported the pair-samples *t* test results. The effect size for the construct school leadership actions scored near the medium effect category with the variable of five to 12 years of experience in their current building. Although when I looked at the individual survey items with the construct of school leadership actions, those characteristics associated with the administrative walk-through initiative had the highest mean scores. Furthermore, teachers with one to four years and 13+ years of experience in the current building exceeded Cohen's large effect with score of .96 and .83 respectively for school leadership actions. These two independent years of experience categories demonstrated similar individual item constructs mean scores for the administrative walk-through qualities.

Table 34

Comparison of Overall Empowerment Change for Core Constructs for Independent Variable – Years of Experience in Current Building (Pre-Post) Paired-Samples T Test and Cohen's d Score

Years of Experience	1 – 4 Years (*n* = 36)			5 – 12 Years (*n* = 26)			13+ Years (*n* = 25)		
	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* Score	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* Score	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
Time	1.70	.098	0.28	2.70	.012	0.53	1.220	.232	0.24
Facilities and Resources	2.59	.014	0.46	0.33	.746	0.01	0.647	.524	0.10
Managing Student Conduct	0.72	.474	0.11	1.10	.284	0.23	2.590	.016	0.52
Teacher Leadership Opportunities	3.40	.002	0.59	3.15	.004	0.63	1.010	.322	0.20

Table 34 (continued)

Years of Experience	1 – 4 Years (n = 36)			5 – 12 Years (n = 26)			13+ Years (n = 25)		
	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* Score	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen *d* Score	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
School Leadership Actions	5.84	.000	0.96	2.12	.045	0.43	4.24	.000	0.83
Decisions with Instructional Practices	4.79	.000	0.80	2.70	.012	0.56	1.76	.092	0.33
Professional Development Opportunities	2.76	.009	0.47	2.44	.022	0.50	2.78	.010	0.55

Note. Significant at the $p < .05$ level (Rosnar, 2005); effect size as measured by Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988).

The analysis of the core construct data illuminated broad ideas about teacher empowerment characteristics and frequency of the qualities. However, the survey was a commercial tool, and it did not identify what specific aspects of the school initiatives attributed to the increased sense in empowerment. Although the administrative walk-throughs, teacher evaluation tool, and other leadership actions were not addressed in the survey specifically, additional data for Ancillary Research Questions 4 through 6 were obtained through interviews to clarify what leadership actions had the greatest effect on teacher empowerment.

Ancillary Research Question #4 asked, "What aspects of administrative walk-throughs cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?" To distinguish the leadership actions of the administrative walk-through process that influence teachers' sense of empowerment, I examined

the open-ended question at the end of the survey and the interview qualitative data. The open-ended question asked, "In what ways do school administrators support your feelings of professionalism and empowerment e.g. walk-throughs, evaluation process, or other leadership actions?" The interview began with a general question about when teachers felt empowered, "Describe to me moments in your classroom that you feel empowered." Interview questions continued to collect information about empowerment with specific questions about the walk-through initiative, the evaluation tool, and other actions of the school's leadership. As I began the initial coding for the interviews, the open-ended question, and my anecdotal field notes, I continually reviewed the identified teacher empowerment attributes.

The open coding process began with in vivo coding to capture participant voices and deepen the understanding of participant views. From this initial list, I continued with the first cycle coding with structural coding to identify broad themes and ideas through identifying short phrases and indexing the initial findings (Saldana, 2009). Table 35 represents the initial codes that resulted from the first cycle of coding and analysis.

Table 35

Initial Codes

Accountable	Affirm	Approachable
Collaborative	Communication	Data
Decision-Making	Evaluative	Expectations
Feedback	Focus	Immediate Feedback
Monitoring	Professional	Quick
Structure	Supported	Trust
Value	Visibility	

The second coding cycle was utilized to reorganize and refine the data codes from the first cycle into categories and themes (Saldana, 2009). For the second coding cycle, I used axial coding to refine and reorganize codes into specific conceptual categories identified in the open coding process by rereading transcripts and memo notes (Richard & Morse, 2007; Saldana, 2009). These categories were created through the information gathered in the literature review (Table 36).

Table 36

Identified Attributes of Empowerment Actions by All Interviewed Participants

Empowerment Action Categories	Identified Empowerment Codes or Characteristics
Walk-throughs	Accountable Affirm Approachable Collaborative Communication Decision-making Expectations Immediate Feedback Focus Monitoring Professional Quick Structure Supported Trust Value Visibility
Evaluation Process	Accountable Evaluative Feedback Monitoring Structure

Table 36 (continued)

Empowerment Action Categories	Identified Empowerment Codes or Characteristics
Other School Leadership Actions	Affirm Collaborative Focus Professional Supported Value

The interview questions asked respondents to indicate when they felt empowered. During axial coding, I reduced the first cycle of codes to three empowerment action categories—walk-throughs, the evaluation process, and other school leadership actions. However, the attributes of the administrative walk-through process elicited the highest association with teacher empowerment. Only three respondents identified attributes of the evaluation process and four recognized attributes of other school leadership actions when identifying when they felt empowered. In contrast, all of the interview participants associated attributes of the walk-through to their increased sense of empowerment (Table 37).

Table 37

Frequency of Identified Attributes of Empowerment Actions in All Questions for All Interviewed Participants

Attributes	# of Respondents (n = 10)	% of Respondents
Walk-throughs	10	100%
Evaluation Process	3	30%
Other School Leadership Actions	4	40%

Two themes emerged from the teacher interviews, the open-ended survey question, and my field notes. All teachers, regardless of years of experience or the subjects they taught, identified themes of immediate feedback and support as overarching positive empowerment attributes as a result of the administrative walk-through process. Each of the themes had characteristics associated with one theme and other overlapping characteristics that touched both themes. The following information represents the data supporting the two themes and the empowerment codes or characteristics associated with each theme (as illustrated in Table 36). Although characteristics were reported as distinct to each theme, there was some overlap. In addition, when teachers spoke about more than one theme at a time, data were referenced with the themes mentioned and coded in all corresponding categories.

It is important to note that the identity of the teachers was protected. Teachers were only identified through subject taught and experience category. Interviewees added varying amounts of information that composed the following data, but all interviewees identified both themes of immediate feedback and support.

Walk-Through Process Theme 1

Immediate feedback. The theme of immediate feedback from the walk-through process had several codes that were associated with teacher empowerment. Accountability, professional reflection, constructive feedback, opportunities for collaboration, and instructional decision making were all reoccurring codes or characteristics for empowerment linked to walk-through feedback.

Teachers welcomed the opportunity for administrative walk-throughs. In general, teachers appreciated the accountability that the walk-through process fostered. As an example, an experienced math/English teacher disclosed,

> I want the principal in my classroom and in my colleague's classroom and the walk-through makes that happen. You know, we are all accountable for all these students. The evaluation always seems like a gotcha, no matter what you are told. The walk-throughs were casual and I got feedback right away. And more importantly, spoke later about instruction and it supported the direction of teaching in my classroom. And I was around when other conversations occurred and I knew they were being held accountable to our kids too.

A novice teacher of other subjects added,

> Walk-throughs hold all of us down here in the music department accountable. You know, we are held accountable during our concerts and other public performances, but it's nice to see the increased visits of the principals in my classroom and get the comments about the observation that day and sometimes immediately. Those comments inspire me to work on teaching, either through proof that I am doing a good job or, hey you know, I could do better job by trying this.

The interviews revealed that accountability was important to teachers. Through the immediate feedback provided by the administrators, teachers had a sense of accountability, which increased their empowerment to make classroom and curricular decisions. An experienced science/social studies teacher shared feelings on the immediate feedback improving instructional decisions,

> It's good to get the feedback from my principal, good, bad, or whatever. Just the chance to say that was cool and you know you could try this, makes me feel ok to try new things and put new slants on how I am teaching and what I am teaching.

A veteran math/English teacher identified the immediate feedback that encouraged the teacher to make curricular decisions,

> The principal is in my classroom much more often and I really feel that they are trying to move away from the evaluator role to more of a coach, looking at what I am doing and how I am doing it, offer suggestions, but most importantly I have the ability to offer my thoughts, be reflective of my own teaching. Then I head back to class and make adjustments for the next class.

Similar to the accountability, teachers revealed they became reflective practitioners, as a characteristic of empowerment through the feedback they received during the walk-through process. An experienced science/social studies teacher revealed, "With the walk-throughs I feel like my principal knows me as a teacher and cares about what I do. I also feel that I can have a conversation with my boss about my thoughts, about my class." A novice teacher of other subjects stated this about the administrative walk-throughs,

> It's good for me. I've noticed since they started the walk-throughs. The feedback is much more specific to teaching style and content and because the feedback is much more specific to teaching, I am much more thoughtful of what and how I am teaching in my classroom and really evaluating how well it is working.

Teachers continued to validate that the feedback from the walk-throughs empowered them through professional reflection and constructive feedback. "The feedback has been great. Our conversations have challenged me to grow professionally," an experienced teacher of other subjects noted. He continued, "I don't mind direction from the principal as long as we talk about the needs together. I want to be a part of the process." In general, teachers had an increased sense of empowerment based on the immediate feedback they received from the walk-throughs. Teachers felt empowered from the feedback provided to suggest and make instructional decisions immediately in their classroom.

Teachers communicated through the interviews that the feedback received during the walk-through initiative promoted empowerment through collaboration and instructional decision-making. A veteran math/English teacher conveyed thoughts on the immediate feedback from the walk-throughs,

> I feel most empowered in my classroom when I can make decisions about my content that I teach, being able to decide the pace I can teach. It helps me feel like I am in control of the learning. I feel if a principal visits my room and then gives me feedback, I feel like a professional because my instructional decisions are supported by the principal. I feel confident in sharing my thoughts with the other teachers in my hallway. I have not had the confidence to do this in the past.

A veteran science/social studies teacher told how he had a sense of empowerment when making instructional decisions from the immediate feedback provided as a result of the administrative walk-through process,

> The walk-throughs provide the administration time to observe and share thoughts about my instruction. It facilitates the sharing between teachers. The feedback, whether casual conversation right after, or a quick email after, or during learning log meetings, it is an opportunity to validate, or improve my instruction and share it with others.

The characteristics of collaboration continued to emerge from walk-through feedback during the coding process. A veteran math/English teacher commented, "Unlike prior to this year, you have the opportunity to provide your professional experience to other teachers due to the conversation facilitated by the walk-through process." In comparison a novice math/English teacher mentioned,

> I appreciate the opportunity to improve my teaching. . .the walk-throughs allow the principal to see me teach, share his view, and provide collaboration time with him, the department chair, or other teachers. I feel that they want me to grow.

Another veteran math/English teacher stated,

> I have been on the books here over 20 years and I have seen it all. I have been mandated to use program after program, and I feel most in control of my class when in between those programs. I am able to work with my peers and we make the instructional decisions. The increased walk-throughs this year seemed to focus us on teaching and sharing. The feedback we received promoted those sharing opportunities in the hallway and during the learning log meetings.

Participants responded to the immediate feedback from the walk-through initiative in multiple ways. However, the teachers repeatedly identified an increased sense of empowerment while receiving immediate feedback. Teachers noted the increased accountability and professional reflection supported their ability to make instructional decisions in their classroom. In addition, teachers detailed experiences of empowerment through increased collaborative opportunities to make pedagogical and curricular determinations with their colleagues.

Walk-Through Process Theme 2

Support. Participants identified a theme of support that promoted an increased sense of empowerment. The theme of support from the walk-through process had two reoccurring characteristics or codes that were associated with an increased sense of empowerment—trust and validation.

During the course of the interviews, teachers detailed the code of trust and support from the administrative walk-through. As an example, when a teacher was asked directly about how

the administrative walk-through initiative impacts your feeling of empowerment, a veteran science/social studies responded,

> I feel like my principal knows me as a teacher and cares about what I do. I also know that I would not have initiated a talk about curriculum with an administrator unless I had confidence of the support from the administrators from the walk-throughs. They have been in so much, it makes me comfortable and we can talk about my content.

Similar to views revealed by this veteran science/social studies teacher, an experienced math/English teacher disclosed, "I feel like the principals took time to get to know me and my teaching style and in turn increased my ability to suggest and make instructional decisions in my class and share with my fellow teachers." A novice teacher of other subjects added to the theme of support through trust and explained,

> When they enter my classroom, I was not threatened. I trusted them. They were not strangers to my classroom. They knew what I was doing and I felt like I could relax and teach my class, the way I knew how.

A novice science/social studies further described empowerment through trust as a result of the walk-throughs,

> I don't feel like a throwaway teacher. I feel like at times I'm teaching them, but it's good because they trust me enough to ask questions and participate with me and my classes. When they leave, I feel empowered to lead my classes.

Due to the trust teachers have built during this walk-through initiative, teachers have described an increased sense of support and empowerment. A veteran math/English teacher expressed, "I have had a good relationship with principals in the past, but this is a much stronger relationship.

My principal knows what I am teaching and how I am teaching and supports my classroom decisions."

Several teachers seemed to be in agreement about the importance of validation and value for empowerment during the walk-through process. A novice math/English teacher responded,

> My principal spends a lot of time in my room. I really enjoy that because I do at times feel like on an island. I feel that him being in there is like he has my back on my decisions. It validates that I am making solid teaching decisions. GT (Gifted and Talented) parents can be very demanding. He confirms what I am doing and he can support when it is needed.

"The walk-throughs makes me feel like the administrators value what I am doing and when I feel valued, I feel that I have the ability to try new things, make inflight changes for students," communicated an experienced math/English teacher. A veteran math/English teacher continued to add to the frequency of the valued code under the support theme,

> I appreciated the time the administrative team spent in my classroom. I feel like they value me as an educator and a professional when they take time to come by my room. The positive comments and suggestions increase the sense of appreciation, but the trust, the trust to make instructional decisions in my classroom and then to share my practice with others, is truly empowering.

Teachers reported having the ability to make instructional decisions and share practice as products of their increased sense of empowerment. However, many of the teachers expressly identified administrative support from increased trust and validation from the walk-through initiative created the increase in empowerment. Although it is important to identify attributes of

increased empowerment, it is equally important to identify the actions contributing to why the increase has occurred.

Ancillary Research Question 5 asked, "What aspects of the teacher evaluation process cause the teachers to feel more or less empowered?" I continued to examine the open-ended question at the end of the survey and the interview qualitative data to identify what aspects of the evaluation process increased a teacher's feeling of empowerment. These questions yielded little insight about the evaluation process and how it empowered teachers. Anticipating that, one of the interview questions specifically targeted the evaluation tool and teacher empowerment. I again reviewed the initial (Table 35) and secondary (Table 36) coding cycles to identify codes that aligned with the attributes of the evaluation process.

The theme of feedback, which was associated with teacher empowerment, emerged from the teacher interviews, open-ended questions, and my field notes as related to teacher evaluations. The following information represents the data supporting the theme and the empowerment codes or characteristics associated with the theme. Although characteristics or codes were reported as distinct to each theme, there was some overlap. Teachers often spoke about more than one administrative action at a time. When multiple themes were mentioned, data was coded in all corresponding categories. The teacher identities were protected and only identified through subject taught and years of service category. As a reminder from Table 37, only three teachers identified attributes of teacher empowerment that may be associated with the teacher evaluations.

Evaluation Process Theme 1

Feedback. The theme of feedback from the teacher evaluation process aligned with a few codes that were associated with teacher empowerment. Similar to the walk-through process,

accountability, professional reflection, and constructive feedback were reoccurring codes for empowerment linked to the evaluation process. However, the context of the code differed from the codes associated with the immediate feedback theme from the walk-through initiative.

In general, teachers welcomed the opportunity to have constructive feedback from observations, but the setting of the evaluation process changed the type of feedback received. In other words, during a formal observation, feedback to the teacher might be different from the informal feedback received after a walk-through. As an example, an experienced science/social studies teacher shared these thoughts about feedback during the evaluation process,

> The feedback from my principal is something that is always a positive in the sense that it challenges my thinking. It helps me to think about instruction—it helps me to be more reflective. But it's hard for me to say that because of the feedback I feel more empowered. It seems like it's a formal evaluation all the time. I'll go back to it helps me to be more reflective and from that I make changes. So when I think of it in those terms I am empowered because I think about what needs to be changed and I make those changes. I would like to have the feedback immediately so that what was observed is still fresh in my mind especially since the evaluation is so formal.

As reflected in the above comments, the evaluation process created a formal setting and a delay in the constructive comments. Immediate feedback, in a less formal process, would have been preferred by the teacher.

Another teacher responded similarly when asked about the evaluation process and if it made them feel more or less empowered. A veteran math/English teacher stated,

> I appreciated the comments from my principals when he comes in to do an evaluation. I always receive feedback and it really helps me to focus on what I am having the students

> do. Sometimes though I don't get the comments until several days later. I would love to have the chance to sit down with my principal just after the observation so we could talk about it. That way neither one of us would get distracted by other things and then our talks would lead me to make decisions about what I would do next with my students.

A novice math/English teacher shared how the evaluation process did not increase his sense of empowerment when making instructional decision in his classroom,

> The support system that is in place for me and other new teachers is great. I feel comfortable talking with my principal and fellow teachers about how to become a better teacher but the evaluation process makes me uneasy. I want to do a great job but the conversations I have that are not a part of my observation give me more confidence to make choices in the classroom more than the evaluation.

Another experienced math/English teacher added, "The evaluation always seems like a gotcha, no matter what you are told. The walk-throughs were casual and I got feedback right away."

A few teachers shared that the evaluation process provided feedback that increased their sense of empowerment. However, the lack of immediacy in the feedback delayed the teachers' ability to make changes in instructional practice. Further, at times the delay caused anxiety for the teachers. Although teachers identified feedback as a theme for the evaluation process that caused the teachers to have an increase sense of empowerment; other attributes lessened their sense of empowerment.

Ancillary Research Question 6 asked, "What other school leadership actions cause the teachers to feel more or less empowered?" For the purpose of this study other school leadership actions are those action not associated with the walk-through initiative or the evaluations

process. As an example, other school leadership actions include professional development opportunities, time management, and managing student conduct.

One of the interview questions specifically targeted the other school leadership actions and teacher empowerment. I reviewed the initial coding cycle (Table 35) and secondary coding cycle (Table 36) to identify codes that aligned with the attributes of the evaluation process.

Two themes associated with teacher empowerment emerged from the teacher interviews, open-ended questions, and my field notes. The themes of decision-making and professional development had characteristics commonly associated with teacher empowerment. As a reminder from Table 37, only four teachers identified attributes of teacher empowerment that may be associated with the other school leadership actions.

Other School Leadership Actions Theme 1

Decision-making. Decision-making was the one theme associated with other leadership actions. Decision-making attributes identified from other school leadership actions produced a few codes associated with teacher empowerment. Similar to the walk-through process, affirmation, focus, and professionalism were reoccurring codes for empowerment linked to other school leadership actions. However, the context of the code differed from the codes associated with the walk-through initiative.

Teachers recognized the opportunity to have input for curricular decisions as an action that increases their sense of empowerment. An experienced teacher of other subjects stated, "When I am able to talk with my principal about instruction and make decisions in my classroom I feel most empowered then." However, the context of the code was often included in the walk-through initiative attributes even though the interview participant identified the code with other

school leadership actions. For example, a veteran math/English teacher conveyed these thoughts,

> I feel most empowered in my classroom when I can make decisions about my content that I teach, being able to decide pace I can teach. It helps me feel like I am in control of the learning. I feel if a principal visits my room. . . I feel like a professional because my instructional decisions are supported by the principal.

Similar to the views of the veteran math/English teacher, a veteran science/social studies teachers added,

> I feel like my principal knows me as a teacher and cares about what I do. I also know that I would not have initiated a talk about curriculum with an administrator unless I had confidence of the support from the administrators from the walk-throughs. They have been in so much, it makes me comfortable and we can talk about my content.

Interview participants shared that curricular decision-making was an administrative action, other than the walk-through initiative and the evaluation process, which increased their sense of empowerment. Teachers identified the increased visibility and communication of the walk-throughs increased their ability to be involved in the decision-making process. However, the decision-making process was often associated with the walk-through initiative.

Other School Leadership Actions Theme 2

Professional development. In the teachers' responses, participants identified a theme of professional development that promoted an increased sense of empowerment. The theme of professional development had two reoccurring codes from the walk-through process that were associated with an increased sense of empowerment: trust and validation.

Teachers detailed the code of professional development as an action of the school administrator that increased their sense of empowerment. However, the increased opportunities tended to be a result of the frequent observations conducted by the administrative team during the walk-through process. A novice science/social studies teacher shared, "The chances I have to participate in PD (professional development) is great and helps me make adjustments to teaching. PD makes the changes I try not feel so risky. I am permitted to try things that are new." Similar to the theme of decision-making, the framework of the professional development code was frequently included in association with the administrative walk-throughs. For instance, an experienced teacher of other subjects described empowerment and professional development,

> Usually I don't take much away from the professional development but I will say the time we have had together as a staff to talk about what really works has been worthwhile. And it's nice to have the administration affirm what really works after they see us teaching. It's nice to be treated as a professional.

An experienced math/English teacher added her views of teacher empowerment through professional development,

> I believe that if we spend time in professional development it's for a reason so I really try to be mindful of what I can take away and use in my room. My principal recently did a walkthrough and the feedback I was giving was related to the PD we have been working on. I felt really positive about my instruction and asked if I could share out or offer my take on the PD at our next staff meeting. He agreed to allow me to help lead the next round of PD.

Like the views shared by the experienced math/English teacher, a veteran math/English teacher conveyed that professional development fostered a sense of empowerment as an

administrative action; however the common thread of the administrative walk-through was still described,

> I wish we had more time for professional development because it has been really great recently and when it all lines up. I get a chance to collaborate with my peers prior to teaching and the try ideas out in my classroom. Then after my principal visits I get to talk with him about the teaching methods I used from the PD session. The conversations with my principal and peers give me the confidence to know I'm on the right track in my decision making for students.

Teachers identified that decision-making and professional development as administrative actions, other than the walk-through initiative and the evaluations process that increased their sense of empowerment. Although it is important to identify these administrative actions that increased teachers' feelings of empowerment, it is equally important to identify the actions contributing to why the increase has occurred. Frequently, teacher listed walk-through characteristics associated with professional development opportunities and decision-making.

Summary of Data Analysis

Several significant findings were reported through the quantitative data analysis in this chapter. There was a statistically significant increase in feeling empowered for all teacher participants following the implementation of the walk-through initiative. Teachers of math and English experienced a greater increase in feelings of empowerment when compared to the non-math and English teaching counterparts. Although not directly related to the research questions, teachers who participated in LLMs had increased feelings of empowerment when compared to those do not participate in LLMs. In addition, regardless of the participants' years of teaching

experience or years of service in current building, the interviews validated the importance of the walk-throughs as their sense of empowerment increased during the school year.

When I analyzed the seven core constructs of the survey, I considered a variety of independent variables, including subject taught, participation in learning log meetings, years of experience, and years of experience in current building. School leadership actions had the largest effect on increasing a teacher's feeling of empowerment for all participants and all identified teacher groups. The survey construct that displayed the most impact following school leadership actions varied between professional development opportunities, decision with instructional practices, and teacher leadership opportunities.

In addition to the quantitative findings, there were several themes reported from the interviews, my anecdotal notes, and the open-end question at the end of the post-survey in this chapter. All teachers, regardless of subject taught or years of experience, described an increased sense of empowerment as a result of the administrative walk-through initiative. Through the coding process, I identified two themes that teachers associated with the walk-throughs and an increased sense of empowerment—immediate feedback and support. The themes of immediate feedback, accountability, professional reflection, constructive feedback, opportunities for collaboration, and instructional decision-making were all reoccurring codes for empowerment. In addition, the increased presence of the administrators in the classrooms fostered a supportive, trusting environment that made teachers feel valued. Further, when teachers were working in this type of environment they had an increase in empowerment.

As I continued to analyze the data and reviewed teacher evaluations and other administrative actions that influenced the sense of empowerment, I found three additional themes that appeared to be unrelated to the walk-through initiative—feedback, decision-making, and

professional development. However, these themes for teacher empowerment were either included as an attribute or were the results of the walk-through initiative. These results and their implications are further discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

AND DRAFT OF A MANUSCRIPT FOR POSSIBLE SUBMISSION TO A PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL EMPOWERING TEACHERS DURING AN ADMINISTRATIVE WALK-THROUGH INITIATIVE AT A TURNAROUND SCHOOL

Abstract

This study sought (a) to analyze how teachers perceive their level of empowerment based on the impact of administrative walk-throughs, formal evaluations, and other leadership actions of the administrators in their turnaround schools; (b) to unveil which leadership actions are associated with the highest levels of teacher empowerment; and (c) to include the voices of teachers in understanding their perceptions. Major findings were:

1. All teacher participants felt empowered because leaders were conducting walk-throughs in their classrooms.
2. In general, teachers of math and English, who received more frequent walk-throughs compared to other teachers, had a greater increase in TELL survey empowerment score.
3. Teachers who participated in collaborative data meetings, called learning log meetings, experienced increased feelings of empowerment compared to their colleagues who were not participating in learning log meetings.
4. Regardless of the participants' years of teaching experience or years of service in current building, teachers validated the importance of the walk-throughs as their sense of empowerment increased during the school year.
5. Teachers reported that immediate feedback and leadership support were associated with their heightened sense of empowerment during the walk-through process.

6. The increased presence of the administrators in the classrooms fostered a supportive, trusting environment that made teachers feel valued

Keywords: Teacher empowerment, walk-throughs, teacher evaluation, principal leadership

Background

Turning around the lowest achieving schools was listed as a priority objective of the Obama administration and was detailed specifically in the Race to the Top initiative. Investing over 4 billion dollars since 2009, including 400 million dollars for Race to the Top (USDOE, 2009), the federal government supported educational reform with robust funding. The phrase "school turnaround" was coined to describe the increased emphasis on rapid school improvement with the lowest achieving schools (Duke, 2012; Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Herman, 2012; Murphy, 2010; Robinson & Buntrock, 2011; Salmonowicz, 2009).

Administrative walk-throughs, basically unannounced classroom observations of a teacher by an instructional leader, lasting five to 20 minutes, can be an integral component of a principal's responsibilities. By conducting walkthroughs, principals and other school leaders can efficiently gain knowledge of instructional practices (Bloom, 2007; David, 2008; Downey 2004). Walk-throughs serve as a process for monitoring classroom instructional practice and student engagement. Frequent observation of instruction enables principals to know their personnel and establishes principals as the instructional leaders of their buildings. Another outcome of effective walk-throughs is the opportunity provided to empower teachers through sharing of instructional practices observed during the walk-throughs (Duke & Jacobson 2011; Murphy, 2010; Ramalho et al., 2010).

There is evidence that the status of America's teachers is eroding (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Dillon, 2011; Osunde & Omoruyi, 2005). To counter this, leaders would be wise to support

teachers in gaining a sense of autonomy. Self-efficacy refers to the teachers' sense of their ability to positively affect student learning through empowerment and decision-making (Short, 1994). Additional earlier research from Short (1994) strengthened Duke and Jacobson's (2011) findings and defined the dimensions of teacher empowerment as decision-making, autonomy, professional growth, status, self-efficacy, and impact. Decision-making and autonomy are closely related. These two dimensions can include the teachers' ability to influence or select budgetary, scheduling, curricular, and professional growth opportunities. Participation in the decision-making process increases teachers' control of their work environment. Professional growth opportunities refers to teachers' perceptions that the school can provide them with opportunities to continuously learn and develop their respective skill sets. There are many common themes found in articles, books, and studies for facilitating teacher empowerment.

Teacher empowerment and administrative monitoring of instruction through walk-throughs are two seemingly juxtaposed instructional ideas. Administrative walk-throughs appear to be in direct opposition to teacher empowerment because of the top down connotations of administrative observation and evaluation and the delegation of authority that is associated with teacher empowerment. However, these two initiatives share key attributes that could improve student achievement and turnaround (Figure 1). Administrative walk-throughs can be used to support the collaborative use of data, instructional initiatives, and differentiation of instruction. My hypothesis was that teacher empowerment would be increased when administrators monitor instruction via walk-throughs.

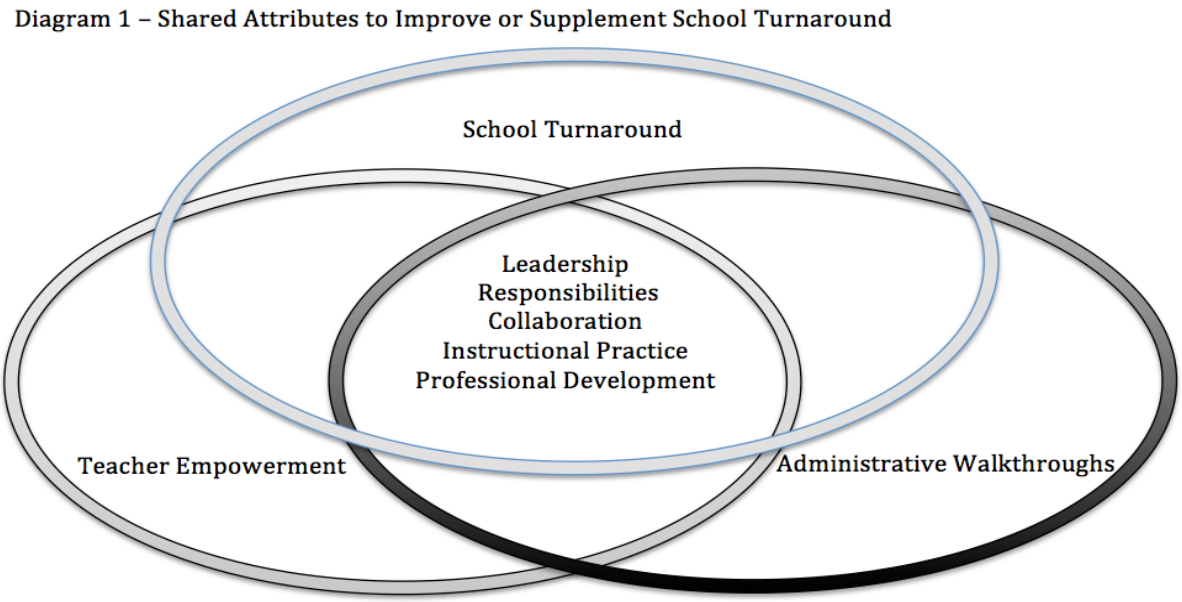

Figure 1. Shared attributes to improve or supplement school turnaround.

Research Questions

The perceptions of teachers involved in the implementation of a walk-through initiative in a turnaround school provided the foundation for my research questions. There was one central research question that guided this study, What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative? Ancillary research questions included, What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for math and English teachers when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative? What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for teachers who teach subjects other than math or English when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative? What aspects of **administrative walk-throughs** cause teachers to feel more or less empowered? What aspects of the **teacher evaluation process** cause the teachers to feel more or less empowered? What other **school leadership actions** cause teachers to feel more or less empowered?

Literature Review

School turnaround. School turnaround, a term coined around 2009, implying quick and dramatic improvement in student achievement data, (Duke, 2012; Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Herman, 2012; Murphy, 2010; Robinson & Buntrock, 2011; Salmonowicz, 2009) might require an adjustment in leadership, faculty empowerment, and/or instructional monitoring. Attributes of a turnaround school can include adopting a new governance structure, which may include a turnaround leader. The school must use data to identify and implement an instructional program that is research based and vertically aligned from grade to grade. Additionally, the school must use data to differentiate instruction. The school schedule must be altered to increase learning time. Community-oriented services must be offered for students for appropriate social-emotional programs.

According to Kowal and Ableidinger (2011), the school turnaround process should be guided by principles established locally. This type of reform should be based on factors that have proven successful in the past. Then, schools should continue to reevaluate goals, timelines, and outcomes based on the specific school indicators. For example, in order to accomplish school turnaround, according to Kowal and Aleidinger (2011) and McLester (2011), the building leader should identify, monitor, and act on what the indicators reveal. Unfortunately, increasing workloads have prevented principals from spending time in the classrooms (Frase et al., 1999). Despite their increased workloads, principals must spend a greater proportion of time in the classroom to facilitate school turnaround.

Administrative walk-throughs. The school walk-through process was originally adapted from the business model of management by walking around (MBWA) (Downey, 2004; Dyril, 2008; Frase et al., 1999). Downey (2004) modified the business model MBWA for the

walk-through model of frequent, informal visits by the principal looking for best practices in instructional pedagogy and is often credited as the person who coined the term "classroom walk-through." Downey's 2004 book, *The Three Minute Walk-Through: Changing School Supervisory Practice One Teacher at a Time* is cited in many articles (Bloom, 2007; Bushman, 2006; Dyril, 2008). Downey details a five-step process: (a) moving staff to reflective inquiry, (b) focusing on the reflective question and conversation, (c) constructing a taxonomy of reflective questions and their use in the classroom walk-through, (d) establishing logistical procedures for implementing the walk-through process, cultivating the culture: effectuating change that works, using the walk-through process to promote a collaborative, reflective culture, determining whether walk-throughs are the right stuff, understanding the walk-through as a discursive practice, and (e) linking the walk-through process to a model of teacher growth.

The basics of Downey's process include short, informal visits for gathering data on teacher decisions on curriculum, instruction, resources, and assessments. Walk-throughs should occur throughout the day and be unannounced. Direct and indirect feedback should focus on professional growth through reflection, coaching, and collaboration.

Walk-throughs linked to professional learning communities (PLCs) and continuous improvement will demonstrate a positive contribution to the school culture. On the other hand, walk-throughs implemented without collaboration and clear expectations might create animosity among the staff and leadership. Key characteristics for a successful walk-through initiative according to Bloom (2007) are that the focus of walk-throughs during PLCs is grounded on standards and student learning. Walk-through questions need to include who, what, when, where, and why. Suggestions from the walk-through data should reflect the high expectations of a simple process that is aligned with student data. The suggested process needs to be ongoing

and supported by adequate resources. The impact of successful implementation according to Bloom (2007) will drive school improvement through the use of data, collaboration, and professional growth.

The walk-through process initiated with fidelity should be a deeply reflective learning experience for all stakeholders (Bushman, 2006). More recently, according to Dyril (2008), technology is sweeping the educational field to streamline the walk-through process via handheld devices, software, and Internet based data collection. David (2008) recognized that the variety of ways walk-throughs are defined, executed, and documented are numerous. However, when walk-throughs are implemented in conjunction with opportunities for collegial collaboration the administrative walk-through process can empower teachers.

School turnaround and administrative leadership. Change will have to occur for chronically failing schools to create school turnaround and sustain the improved student achievement. School turnaround requires an adjustment in leadership, faculty empowerment, and / or instructional monitoring (Kowal & Aleidinger, 2011; McLester, 2011). Bryk's (2010) stressed strong instructional guidance and principal leadership as essential characteristics of school turnaround. The principal must be a facilitator for teachers by establishing the priorities for resources and acting as a buffer for distractors while monitoring instructional practices. The principal must take the lead and extend him or herself by reaching out to others to empower teachers.

Teacher empowerment. Teacher empowerment has been described as a process. Teachers develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems without prescribed corrective action from the administration (Short, 1994). Teachers should not work in isolation, but address concerns collaboratively with their colleagues. Teacher

empowerment as a construct ties personal competencies and abilities to environments that provide opportunities for choice and autonomy. Duke and Jacobson (2011) examined two low-performing and high-poverty high schools in Texas and how these schools have improved student achievement. The principals fostered their respective school turnarounds through many similar steps. Each principal facilitated a schedule adjustment that allowed for a common planning time for teachers to make instructional and curricular decisions. Principals collaborated with math and English teachers for strategy sharing, and worked together on data points to focus faculty energy and empower teachers. This example of teacher empowerment was fostered in a school turnaround process while the administration closely monitored teachers and student growth.

Research (New Teacher Center, 2011) based on findings from the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) of Tennessee emphasized the importance of teacher empowerment. The study defined core constructs that describe factors contributing to teacher satisfaction, teacher retention, and empowerment. Attributes of teacher empowerment include a number of components similar to research findings, including collaboration time, decision-making opportunities, professional development, and leadership opportunities (New Teacher Center, 2011). More specifically, teacher empowerment and retention was associated with teachers' perceptions of the school's administrators and their ability to create a trusting, supportive environment to address teacher concerns.

Research Design and Procedure

Research methods and data analysis. This exploratory study utilized mixed method procedures to provide complementary research data (Creswell, 2002; Hoy, 2010), since neither quantitative nor qualitative methods alone sufficiently capture the trends and details of

the complex juxtaposition between teacher empowerment and administrative actions during school improvement efforts. The quantitative data was collected from the TELL survey just before the walk-through initiative began and compared to results a year later on the same post-survey. The TELL survey is organized into these seven core constructs—time, facilities and resources, managing student conduct, teacher leadership opportunities, school leadership actions, professional development, and decision with instructional practices. The relationship between the pre- survey and post- survey teacher empowerment scores was examined with a paired-samples *t* test using SPSS to determine statistical significance. To determine substantive significant, an effect size was calculated using Cohen's *d* score. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the relationships between the independent variables (teacher subject area, participation or non-participation in learning log meetings, years of experience in the school, and total years of teaching experience) and the dependent variables (teacher empowerment growth as measured by the construct scores and the total empowerment score on the TELL survey).

Additionally, qualitative data was gathered from post-survey interviews with a purposeful sample of 10 teachers. The qualitative data analysis began with open coding to disaggregate data into categories by examining similarities and differences. Structural and in vivo coding were used to extract the exact word or short phrase from the interview that the participants used to represent themes (Saldana, 2009) and separate the codes into categories (Creswell, 2013, Richard & Morse 2007; Saldana, 2009). Axial coding was conducted to further develop and review data codes that were generated through the open coding process (Saldana 2009). As a result of the second coding cycle, I identified a select list of the broader themes and codes into more refined conceptual categories (Richard & Morse 2007; Saldana, 2009).

Demographics. This exploratory study was conducted at two Indiana schools in a small city that had a high percentage of student poverty and were immersed in school turnaround processes with administrators who were minimally completing one walk-through every other week. The middle school had an enrollment of 755 students in Grades 6 through 8. The enrollment ethnicity breakdown for the 2013-2014 school year was 70.3% White, African–American 17.5%, multiracial 9.1%, 2.4% Hispanic, and .4% American Indian. Of the 755 students, 642 students (84.9%) received free or reduced lunches. The middle school sample school had been on academic watch or received an accountability grade of F for the last four years. In addition, the ISTEP scores were below the state average during this time.

The second high school had an enrollment of 913 students. The ethnic breakdown of the high school is 61.2% White, 24.1% African-American, 9.5% multiracial, 2.8% Hispanic, 1.9% Asian, and .3% American Indian. Of the 913 high school students, 563 (61%) students received free or reduced lunches. During the 2009 – 2010 school year, the high school was classified as a school on "Academic Probation" and following a school visit by the IDOE technical assistant team (TAT), deemed unacceptable in the school's readiness to learn, readiness to teach, and readiness to act (IDOE, 2010). According to Indiana's federal accountability waiver, the high school was classified as a "Priority School" or in a turnaround status (IDOE, 2011).

Surveys were initially distributed to the 198 faculty members of the two secondary schools (middle school and high school) in the fall of 2014. Of the original 198 who were recruited, 87 participants completed both the pre-survey and post-survey in the spring of 2015 resulting in a response rate of 43.9% (n = 87). Participants were predominantly veteran teachers with 13 or more years of experience in education (49%, n = 43). The majority of the participants (41%, n = 36) had been in their current building for fewer than four years. Participants identified

their subject areas by selecting one of three subject categories: math/English, science/social studies, or other subject areas. Math/English teachers represented 57% (n = 50), science/social studies accounted for 23% (n = 23), and teachers of other subject areas represented 20% (n = 20) of the participant population. There were more than double the number of math/English teachers due the greater number of sections of these subjects provided at the two schools. Teachers were asked to identify whether or not they participated in LLMs, a periodic meeting to discuss data and instructional practice. Teacher participants responded that 66% (n = 57) were involved in learning log meetings.

Summation of Major Findings and Findings Related to Literature Review

The results of this exploratory mix-methods study are presented with regard to my research questions. The study examined teachers' sense of empowerment during the implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative. An analysis revealed a statistically significant change in the teacher empowerment scores following the administrative walk-through initiative. Further, the results were found to be substantially significant as calculated by the Cohen's *d* score. In addition, math/English teachers, who received additional walk-throughs, were found to have a statistically significant difference in scores and a substantially significant difference via a large effect size as calculated by the Cohen's *d* score. Finally, regardless of a teacher's years of experience or years of service in their current building category, the data analysis showed a statistically significant increase in empowerment score and at least displayed Cohen's *d* scores within or above the medium range.

Research Question 1. **What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative?** The TELL survey served as a

pre-post quantitative measure of teachers' sense of empowerment during the implementation of a walk-through initiative. The data analysis revealed a positive statistically significant gain in the post-initiative survey teacher empowerment score with an effect size that exceeded Cohen's convention for a large effect size. This data revealed that the implementation of a formal walk-through initiative increased the teachers' sense of empowerment.

Continued analysis of the quantitative data strengthened the findings that teachers' sense of empowerment increased during the administrative walk-through initiative. A review of the seven core constructs score for all teachers identified school leadership actions as having statically significant empowerment score increases and displayed the largest Cohen effect size. Within the school leadership actions core construct, walk-through characteristics like support, decisions-making, and feedback for reflection to improve instruction displayed a statistically significant increase in the TELL Survey.

The qualitative data provided additional meanings of individual teachers' experiences to illustrate their sense of empowerment. All teachers who were interviewed and many of those who responded to the open-end survey question identified the walk-throughs or aspects of the walk-through initiative that increased their sense of empowerment. Walk-through attributes that were identified include promoting self-reflection, decision-making in instructional practices, increased opportunities for collaboration, and a supported / trusting environment.

This conclusion is supported by several findings from the literature review of my study. Downey (2004) wrote that teacher reflection, collaboration, and professional growth were attributes of effective walk-throughs. Murphy (2010) and Ramalho et al. (2010) reinforced Downey's research and recognized collaboration and sharing of instructional practices as an outcome of effective walk-throughs. In addition, Abrutyn (2006) and Bloom (2007) emphasized

that administrative walk-throughs increase teachers' sense of support in instructional practice and offered supplementary opportunities for collaboration.

To frame the actions of teacher empowerment within the walk-through process, I again referred to the findings of my literature review. Blasé and Blasé (2001), Duke and Jacobson (2011), and Short (1994) defined attributes of teacher empowerment as teachers who were involved in decision-making processes, those who experienced professional growth, and increased self-efficacy. Teachers who had the ability to positively affect student learning via these attributes felt empowered added Papanastasiou and Zembylas (2005) and Short and Rinehart (1993).

My exploratory study did not show that a teacher's sense of empowerment was related to their years of experience, which differs from the research from Short and Rinehart (1993). The quantitative data analysis showed a significantly positive gain in the area of teacher empowerment when comparing the results to the beginning of the year survey results. The empowerment score for all teacher experience categories and the effect size of the positive relationship for each category exceeded the Cohen's convention for a large effect size. Based on these findings, all experience categories showed an increase in their self-perception of empowerment following the administrative walk-through initiative. The qualitative data analysis bolstered these results and supported Darling-Hammond (2000) and Cohen's (2009) findings that veteran teachers have improved investment in their jobs when they have a setting of professional learning and support. Regardless of the years of experience, teachers identified walk-through attributes, such as "feedback," "decision-making" (in reference to instructional practice), and "supported," as actions of empowerment.

Ancillary Question 2. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for math and English teachers when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative? The TELL survey served as a pre-post quantitative measure of teachers' sense of empowerment during the implementation of a walk-through initiative. Math and English teachers were a subgroup of the overall teacher group. The data analysis revealed a positive statistically significant gain in the post-initiative teacher empowerment survey for math and English teachers. In addition, the effect size of the positive relationship exceeded the Cohen's convention for a large effect size. This data supported the findings that the implementation of a formal walk-through initiative increased the teachers' sense of empowerment.

Additional core construct analysis of the TELL survey results for math and English teachers provided supplementary data to support the conclusion. The added review of the seven core constructs scores for math and English teachers identified school leadership actions as having a statically significant empowerment score increase and displayed the largest effect size with a Cohen's *d* score. School leadership actions was the only core construct to exceed the large effect size threshold. Within the school leadership actions core construct walk-through characteristics like administrative support, decisions-making, and feedback for reflection to improve instruction displayed a statistically significant increase in the TELL Survey.

Math and English teachers provided additional supporting data during the interviews. All math and English teachers who were interviewed identified the walk-throughs or aspects of the walk-through initiative that increased their sense of empowerment. An experienced math / English teacher stated:

> The walk-throughs were casual and I got feedback right away. And more importantly, spoke later about instruction and it supported the direction of teaching in my classroom. And I was around when other conversations occurred and I knew they were being held accountable to our kids too.

Immediate feedback and administrative support were themes that were identified by math and English teachers as walk-through attributes that increased their sense of empowerment.

Similar to research question one, the findings for ancillary question two is supported by the findings of my literature review. Research recognizes (Downey 2004; Murphy, 2010; Garza, Merchant, and Ramalho, 2010; Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1993) that a successful implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative will have similar qualities of teacher empowerment. These attributes include: feedback for teacher reflections, collaborative opportunities, and instructional support.

Ancillary Question 3. What is the change in teacher empowerment (pre-post measurement by the Teacher Empowering Leading and Learning Survey) for other teachers (who teach subjects other than math and English) when administrators implement a formal walk-through initiative? The TELL survey served as a pre-post quantitative measure of teachers' sense of empowerment during the implementation of a walk-through initiative. All teachers, excluding math and English teachers, were a subgroup of the overall teacher group. The data analysis revealed a positive statistically significant gain in the post-initiative survey teacher empowerment score when calculated in SPSS. The effect size of the positive relationship exceeded the Cohen's convention for a medium effect size. This data disclosed that the implementation of a formal walk-through initiative increased the teachers' sense of empowerment for all teachers excluding those who teach math and English.

Additional core construct analysis of the TELL survey results provided supplementary data to support the conclusion. The review of the seven core constructs score for math and English teachers identified school leadership actions as having a statically significant empowerment score increase and displayed a medium effect size with a Cohen's *d* score. School leadership actions was one of two core construct to exceed the medium effect size threshold and none of the core constructs displayed a score within Cohen's *d* large effect size. Comparable to all teachers, school leadership actions core construct identified walk-through characteristics like administrative support, decision-making, and feedback for reflection to improve instruction displayed a statistically significant increase in the TELL Survey. Unlike math and English teachers, teachers of all other subjects identified the core construct of decisions with instructional practice within the same effect size as school leadership actions. However, after an analysis of the qualitative data, decisions with instructional practices were associated with the walk-through initiative. As an example, a veteran science / social studies shared:

> I also know that I would not have initiated a talk about curriculum with an administrator unless I had confidence of the support from the administrators from the walk-throughs. They have been in so much, it makes me comfortable and we can talk about my content.

Additional supporting data during the interviews identified the walk-throughs or aspects of the walk-through initiative that increased their sense of empowerment. Immediate feedback and administrative support were themes that were identified by teachers of other subjects, excluding math and English, as walk-through attributes that increased their sense of empowerment.

The conclusions for ancillary question three are supported by the findings of my literature review. Successful implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative will have similar

qualities of teacher empowerment (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Downey 2004; Murphy, 2010; Garza, Merchant, and Ramalho, 2010; Short, 1994; Short and Rinehart, 1993). Similar walk-through and empowerment attributes include: feedback for teacher reflection, collaborative opportunities, classroom support, and decision-making about instruction.

Ancillary Question 4. What aspects of administrative walk-throughs cause teachers to feel more or less empowered? The TELL survey served as a pre-post quantitative measure of teachers' sense of empowerment during the implementation of a walk-through initiative. The quantitative data revealed a strong positive statistically significant gain in the post-initiative survey teacher empowerment score for the core construct of School Leadership Actions. The effect size of the positive relationship exceeded the Cohen's convention for a medium effect size. A closer look at the school leadership actions core construct indicated the attributes associated with a walk-through initiative increased the teachers' sense of empowerment, such as school leadership consistently supports teachers, there is an atmosphere of trust and support, teachers are held to high professional standards for the delivery or instruction, school leadership facilitates the use of data to improve student learning, and teacher receives feedback that can improve teaching.

An examination of the qualitative data from the interviews supported the quantitative findings. All interview participants identified the walk-through initiative or the outcome of the walk-through initiative as a time when they felt empowered. Per the data, in spite of the hierarchical top-down conations of an administrative walk-through initiative, walk-throughs were identified as an opportunity to empower teachers. As an example, teachers continued to validate that the feedback from the walk-throughs empowered them through professional reflection and constructive feedback: "The feedback has been great. Our conversations have

challenged me to grow professionally," an experienced teacher of other subjects noted. He continued, "I don't mind direction from the principal as long as we talk about the needs together. I want to be a part of the process."

The conclusions for ancillary question four are supported by the findings of my literature review. Walk-throughs are not attended for evaluative purposes (Downey 2004; Murphy, 2010). The walk-throughs should assist teachers and administrators in gathering information about instructional practices and fostering conversation on reflection and professional growth (Bloom, 2007; David, 2008; Dyril, 2008; Frase, Downey, & Canciamilla, 1999).

Like the identified attributes of the walk-through initiative, teacher empowerment was characterized as teachers having involvement in decision-making, professional growth opportunities, and increased self-efficacy (Rinehart & Short, 1994; Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1993; Duke & Jacobson, 2011). The qualitative data of this exploratory study supported these previous findings.

The data in this study did not support previous (Short & Rinehart, 1993) findings that teacher empowerment was relative to a teacher's experience or school climate. The quantitative and qualitative data analysis reinforced my results. All teachers that participated in the interview identified walk-through attributes such as feedback, decision-making (in reference to instructional practice), and supported as actions of empowerment in the qualitative data. In addition, all three teacher experience categories novice (one to four years of experience), experienced (five to 12 years of experience), and veteran (13+ years of experience) displayed a statistically significant positive increase in the TELL teacher empowerment survey score.

According to the data in this exploratory study, the involvement in instructional decision-making and opportunities for personal growth and reflections via the administrative walk-

through initiative increased the teachers' sense of empowerment. These outcomes were derived from the immediate feedback provided by the administrator and the supportive and collaborative environment created by the additional classroom visits associated with the walk-throughs.

Ancillary Question 5. What aspects of the teacher evaluation process cause the teachers to feel more or less empowered? An analysis of the quantitative data from the TELL survey did not provide substantial data directly related to the teacher evaluation tool or process. Consequently, I relied on the qualitative data gathered from the interview process to answer Ancillary Question 5. Three of the 10 interview participants identified attributes of the evaluation process that increased their sense of empowerment. Teachers credited their increased sense of empowerment to the feedback for professional growth that was provided during the evaluation process. As identified in the literature review, professional growth was a dimension of teacher empowerment (Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1993; Duke & Jacobson, 2011).

However, previous research (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Duke & Jacobson, 2011; Short, 1994) identified the competence of professional growth as one that is self-directed and not a prescribed corrective action. As an example, an experienced science / social studies teacher shared thoughts about the evaluation process:

> The feedback from my principal is something that is always a positive. . .it helps me to be more reflective. But it's hard for me to say that because of the feedback I feel more empowered. . . I am empowered because I think about what needs to be changed and I make those changes. I would like to have the feedback immediately so that what was observed is still fresh in my mind especially since the evaluation is so formal.

An experienced math/English disclosed, "The evaluation always seems like a gotcha, no matter what you are told. The walk-throughs were casual and I got feedback right away."

Based on this data, the evaluation feedback from professional growth does increase a teacher's sense of empowerment. However, since the direction for profession growth was imposed through the formal evaluation process in this case the teacher's sense of empowerment is lessened.

Ancillary Question 6. What other school leadership actions cause the teachers to feel more or less empowered? For the purpose of this study other school leadership actions are those actions not associated with the walk-through initiative or the evaluations process. As an example, other school leadership actions include professional development opportunities, time management, and managing student conduct. The TELL survey served as a pre-post quantitative measure of teachers' sense of empowerment during the implementation of a walk-through initiative. The quantitative data revealed a strong positive statistically significant gain, $t(86) = 7.07$, $p < .05$, in the overall post-initiative teacher empowerment survey score. A closer look at the individual core constructs indicates that other school leadership actions displayed statistically significant positive gain in the empowerment score; however, the effect size for usage of time, access to facilities and resources, managing student conduct teacher leadership opportunities, and decision with instructional practices all scored within the Cohen's *d* small effect range. The professional development core construct scored within the medium effect size.

An examination of the qualitative data from the interviews clarified the quantitative findings. Four of the ten interview participants identified other leadership actions that contributed to their increased sense of empowerment. Specifically, teachers identified professional development and decision making as empowerment characteristics. For instance, a novice science/social studies teacher added this about other leadership actions and empowerment, "The chances I have to participate in PD (professional development) is great and

helps me make adjustments to teaching. PD makes the changes I try not feel so risky. I am permitted to try things that are new." An experienced teacher math / English teacher shared that participating in professional development and then leading professional development increased their sense of empowerment,

> I believe that if we spend time in professional development it's for a reason so I really try to be mindful of what I can take away and use in my room . . . feedback I was giving was related to the PD we have been working on. I felt really positive about my instruction and asked if I could share out or offer my take on the PD at our next staff meeting.

In addition to professional development, teachers identified decision-making as an attribute of other leadership actions associated with their increased sense of empowerment during the review of the qualitative data. Teachers recognized the opportunity to have input for curricular decisions as an action that increases their sense of empowerment. An experienced teacher of other subjects stated, "When I am able to talk with my principal about instruction and make decisions in my classroom I feel most empowered then." However, the context of the code was often included in the walk-through initiative attributes even though the interview participant identified the code with other school leadership actions. For example, a veteran math/English teacher conveyed these thoughts:

> I feel most empowered in my classroom when I can make decisions about my content that I teach, being able to decide pace I can teach. It helps me feel like I am in control of the learning. I feel if a principal visits my room. . . I feel like a professional because my instructional decisions are supported by the principal.

The conclusions for ancillary question six are supported by the findings of my literature review. Professional development and decision-making are frequently associated with attributes

of teacher empowerment (Short, 1994; Rinehart & Short, 1994; Short & Rinehart, 1993; Duke & Jacobson, 2011).

Teachers identified that decision-making and professional development as other administrative actions, which increased their sense of empowerment. Although it is important to identify these administrative actions that increased teachers' feelings of empowerment, it is equally important to identify the actions contributing to the why the increase has occurred. Frequently, teacher listed walk-through characteristics associated with professional development opportunities and decision-making.

Surprises

There were a few surprises that I noted as I completed my research. I believed that the relationship between a teacher's years of experience and the reported change in empowerment score from the pre-post survey would show a negative correlation. I expected that more experienced teachers would report a small, or even a negative, change in end-of-the-year empowerment score when compared to the pre-survey. However, there was not a significant difference between the reported increases of empowerment between veteran teachers and the other teacher groups. Empowerment scores for all experience categories showed a significant increase between the pre- and post- survey. Additionally, I assumed there would be a positive correlation between tenure in their current building and an increased sense of empowerment. In other words, I anticipated the more experience a teacher had in their current building, the greater increased sense of empowerment they would experience. Similar to years of experience, tenure in their current building showed no significant differences between teacher tenure groups. All building tenure groups showed significant increases in empowerment score. Finally, I assumed that the core construct of time would have would have the most significant influence on the

increase of empowerment score. I found that the construct of time had a statistically significant change for all participants in empowerment score, but the change was classified as having a small effect size. When the a number of the independent variables, such as subject taught and those do not participate in LLMs, were examined individually with the time construct there was not a significant difference.

Limitations

It is important to consider and identify the anticipated and unanticipated limitations of a study. There were four important limitations to consider. First, I was a primary researcher for this exploratory study and an administrator at one of the buildings in the study. As a result, my presence may have limited the type of feedback or participation from teachers. For example, a teacher who sees me in a supervisor role may respond how they believe I would prefer them to respond instead of providing honest feedback.

The second limitation was the survey tool. The tool was a commercial tool and not created to specifically address administrative walk-throughs. More specifically, the survey consisted of detailed core constructs that impact teachers' empowerment and could be associated with the walk-through initiative; the survey did not express address teacher walk-throughs or the evaluation process.

The third limitation is survey participation. The survey is dependent on teacher willingness to complete consent forms, participate in the post-survey, and the teachers' willingness to be interviewed. It is possible that some teachers who feel less empowered may not want to participate in one or all of the exploratory study components.

I am concerned about the turmoil within the district during the exploratory study. There was a substantial change in the staff of one of the secondary buildings, i.e. nearly half of the staff

was new to the building. It may have been better to study a school that was in a more stable period. Additionally, the school corporation was in year two of a new evaluation tool. The new evaluation tool required more observations compared to the previous evaluation tool. The additional classroom visit from the evaluation and walk-throughs may have caused some confusion and apprehension about the purpose of the walk-through initiative.

The final limitation recognizes that the walk-through initiative is not the only administrative action occurring in the schools during the study. The administrative walk-through initiative was the focus of the school and the schools' leadership; however, I could not control all variables or other factors of the school leadership action areas, such as the new evaluation tool and other school leadership actions.

Implications for Action

The findings from this exploratory study can be utilized to empower teachers while implementing an administrative walk-through initiative. To do this the administrator needs to be aware of the impact of her actions and how her actions add to or take away from teachers' sense of being in control of their instructional decisions. In other words, to make the walk-through process effective, administration should gather information during the walk-through for non-evaluative purposes. As a result of the walk-through process, a teacher's sense of empowerment may increase due to their increased participation in decision-making, problem-solving, professional growth, and instructional practices. The findings of this study could have implications for evaluating current instructional practices, implementing a successful walk-through initiative, or giving teachers the opportunity to make decisions about instruction independent of administrative directive.

To empower teachers during a walk-through initiative, school leadership should collaborate with teachers to provide immediate feedback about instructional practice and that feedback should not be evaluative in nature. The dialogue about instructional practice will promote, support, and foster an environment of trust between teachers and administrators. School leadership should use information collected from observations to improve collaborative opportunities among teachers and guide professional development. Additionally, the communication facilitated by the walk-throughs will actively involve teachers and administrators in the decision-making process about instructional practices. As an example, the use of LLMs should be expanded to all departments. During this study only math/English teaches participated in LLMs. The additional opportunities to discuss not only student data, but also instructional practices are supplemented by the information gathered during the walk-through process. Through a supportive and collaborative environment, teachers may enjoy an increased sense of autonomy and take advantage of opportunities for professional reflection and decision making with decreased fear of punitive actions from an evaluation.

The results of this study can be used to evaluate current instructional practices and educational initiatives. Although completing walk-throughs, teachers and administrators can collaborate. Focusing on programs and processes, rather than formal teacher evaluations, educators will gain valuable input on instructional practice effectiveness, ideas for the implementation of new practice, and recommendation for the elimination of ineffective strategies. Based on overall school patterns during walk-throughs, the staff can determine areas of need for ongoing professional development.

Attributes of a successful walk-through initiative can be identified as a result of this exploratory study. The walk-through initiative should be collaborative and non-evaluative in

design. The professional reflection that is associated with the walk-through process will stimulate collaborative conversations with administrators and fellow teachers. The increased professional conversation could result in greater involvement in instructional decision-making and an increased focus on best practice. As a result, teachers and administrators will have a better understanding of current practices and professional development needs of the building.

Finally, the results of this study can be used to facilitate teacher empowerment. The actions of school leadership have a great deal of influence on a teacher's sense of empowerment. However, this can be difficult due to the position of authority administrators hold over teachers. The school administrators must first build trust with the teachers. If walk-throughs are done consistently and with timely feedback then increased teacher empowerment can be supported. In practical terms, the information principals gather during the walk-through process should be used to foster non-threatening opportunities for professional conversations. Walk-throughs done with the purpose of promoting professional conversations have the potential to soften the natural tension between supervisor and employee. Dialogue about instructional practices, professional development, accountability, and student data are examples of conversation topics that can promote trust and help build a teacher's sense of empowerment. Administrative walk-throughs are just one vehicle that can facilitate these empowering opportunities.

Recommendations for Future Research

One suggestion for future research would be to study how walk-throughs could support a school turnaround process. During a turnaround process, a school is often prescribed several mandated tasks to improve school achievement. Required actions often include a change in leadership, staff realignment, or a prescribed school improvement program. For an exploratory study I would suggest limiting the other aspects of the turnaround process to only leadership

actions. In other words, concentrate leadership efforts to the walk-through process without implementing other evaluation processes. Will similar changes occur with a primary focus on walk-throughs alone?

I recommend the use of a survey that breaks down the components of empowerment as it relates to school initiatives. For example, classroom walk-throughs should have been listed as separate questions. The TELL survey is a commercial tool that assess teacher empowerment and teaching/learning conditions.

Another avenue of study would be to review student achievement data to determine if the increased sense of teacher empowerment was translated to improved student learning. With the continued emphasis on testing and assessments, it will be important to see if there is a positive correlation between student achievement and a teacher that has a sense of empowerment. Additionally, in regards to these specific secondary schools, did student achievement increase during the year of this study? Did the increased sense of teacher empowerment and the walk-through initiative continue beyond this year and how did students achieve?

I would consider expanding the study to include elementary schools and schools from a variety of demographic settings. As an example, a similar study could be duplicated in a rural primary school and may have differing results.

Concluding Remarks

This exploratory study in two secondary schools examined the implementation of an administrative walk-through initiative and its relationship to teacher empowerment. The results provided evidence that the establishment of a walk-through initiative has a positive effect on teachers' sense of empowerment. The walk-through process in conjunction with timely dialogue with teachers may promote a trusting and supportive climate in a school. The immediate, non-

evaluative feedback from the walk-through may facilitate professional reflection, collaboration, and allow for teacher input about instructional decisions. Administrators offer feedback to teachers through a variety of actions. I suggest that the walkthrough is only an impetus or a means for the feedback from the principal to the teacher. I argue that it a primary responsibility of the administrator to be cognizant of the timeliness and effectiveness of the feedback. Furthermore, without effective feedback I would argue that the walkthrough process would not have a positive relationship to empowerment. Looking forward, it would be worthwhile to examine and discern the role of giving effective feedback in the walkthrough process and how principals are trained during this process.

This exploratory study provides insight on the exploration of the walkthrough process and how an evaluative process can be used to give teachers more control over their instructional decisions. Building leaders might be able to facilitate improved instructional practices through the implementation of a walk-through process if they give effective feedback to the teachers. Based on my results, principals should put an emphasis on feedback that offers support to the teacher and allows for the teacher to have input in their classroom based on effective feedback. Ultimately, the walkthrough process provides an avenue for timely, safe, and professional dialogue between teacher and principal.

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Appendix

Appendix A Approval Email for Survey

Keri Church <kchurch@newteachercenter.org>
Wed 6/26/2013 2:02 PM

Mark as unread

Great! Best wishes on your dissertation!
keri

Reynolds, Charles Edward
Sent Items

Mark as unread

Keri,

Thank you so much for your quick response. I will review the website for the resources I need. I will let you know what I use and I will cite and credit the New Teacher Center in my work.

Thank you again!

Chuck Reynolds,
Sent from my iPad

REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

Keri Church <kchurch@newteachercenter.org>
Wed 6/26/2013 1:39 PM

Mark as unread

To: ☐ Reynolds, Charles Edward;

- Flag for follow up. Start by Sunday, November 23, 2014. Due by Sunday, November 23, 2014.
- You replied on 6/26/2013 2:00 PM.

Hi Charles,
I am Keri Church, the Associate Director of the Teaching and Learning Conditions Initiative. I can help you as needed with this.

The survey items are not copyrighted, so you may use them in your dissertation study. We only ask that you attribute the survey items to The New Teacher Center (www.newteachercenter.org) in your publications.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

keri

-----Original Message-----
From: Charles Reynolds [mailto:cereynolds2@bsu.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2013 10:43 AM
To: survey@schoolstell.org
Subject: TELL instrument

From: Charles Reynolds <cereynolds2@bsu.edu>
Subject: TELL instrument

Message Body:
I am respectfully requesting contact information about the use of the TELL instrument for my dissertation case study. I would appreciate the opportunity to share my research topic with someone at the New Teacher Center. Thank you for your time.

--
This mail is sent via contact form on TELL Resource Library
http://teachingconditions.org

Appendix B TELL Survey

Introduction

Please indicate your position:

- Teacher (e.g., endorsed librarians, instructional coaches, department heads, vocational ed, literacy specialists)
- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Other Education Professional (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists, social workers)

Please know that your anonymity is guaranteed.

No one in your school, the district or state will be able to view individual surveys, and reports on the results will not include data that could identify individuals. You are being asked demographic information to learn whether educators from different backgrounds and different characteristics look at working conditions differently.

How many total years have you been employed as an educator?

- First Year
- 2 - 3 Years
- 4 - 6 Years
- 7 - 10 Years
- 11 - 20 Years
- 20+ Years

How many total years have you been employed in the school in which you are currently working?

- First Year
- 2 - 3 Years
- 4 - 6 Years
- 7 - 10 Years
- 11 - 20 Years
- 20+ Years

Time

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the use of time in your school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. Class sizes are reasonable such that **teachers*** have the time available to meet the needs of all students.	○	○	○	○	○
b. Teachers have time available to collaborate with colleagues.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions.	○	○	○	○	○
d. The **non-instructional time**** provided for teachers in my school is sufficient.	○	○	○	○	○
e. Efforts are made to minimize the amount of **routine administrative paperwork***** teachers are required to do.	○	○	○	○	○
f. Teachers have sufficient instructional time to meet the needs of all students.	○	○	○	○	○
g. Teachers are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students.	○	○	○	○	○

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.
**Non-instructional time includes any time during the day without the responsibility for student contact, including collaboration planning, meetings/conferences with students and families, etc.
***Routine administrative paperwork means both electronic and paper forms and documentation that must be completed to comply with school, district, state, and federal policies.

In an AVERAGE WEEK, how much time do you devote to the following activities during the school day (i.e., time for which you are under contract to be at the school)?

	None	Less than or equal to 1 hour	More than 1 hour but less than or equal to 3 hours	More than 3 hours but less than or equal to 5 hours	More than 5 hours but less than or equal to 10 hours	More than 10 hours
a. Individual planning time	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. **Collaborative planning time***	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. **Supervisory duties****	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Required committee and/or staff meetings	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Completing required administrative **paperwork*****	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Communicating with parents/guardians and/or the community	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Addressing student discipline issues	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. **Professional development********	○	○	○	○	○	○
i. Preparation for required federal, state and local assessments	○	○	○	○	○	○
j. Delivery of assessments	○	○	○	○	○	○
k. Utilizing results of assessments	○	○	○	○	○	○

*Collaborative time includes time spent working with other teachers within or across grade and subject areas as part of a Professional Learning Community to plan and assess instructional strategies.
**Supervisory duties include hall monitoring, recess, bus and cafeteria coverage, etc.
***Paperwork means both electronic and paper forms and documentation that must be completed to comply with federal, state and local policies.
****Professional development includes all opportunities, formal and informal, where adults learn from one another including graduate courses, in service, workshops, conferences, professional learning communities and other meetings focused on improving teaching and learning.

In an AVERAGE WEEK of teaching, how many hours do you spend on school-related activities outside of the regular school day (before or after school, and/or on weekends)?

- ○ None
- ○ Less than or equal to 1 hour
- ○ More than 1 hour but less than or equal to 3 hours
- ○ More than 3 hour but less than or equal to 5 hours
- ○ More than 5 hour but less than or equal to 10 hours
- ○ More than 10 hours

Facilities and Resources

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school facilities and resources.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. **Teachers*** have sufficient access to appropriate **instructional materials****.	○	○	○	○	○
b. Teachers have sufficient access to instructional technology, including computers, printers, software and internet access.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Teachers have sufficient access to reliable communications technology including phones, faxes and email.	○	○	○	○	○
d. Teachers have sufficient access to office equipment and supplies such as copy machines, paper, pens, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
e. Teachers have sufficient access to a broad range of **professional support personnel.*****	○	○	○	○	○
f. The school environment is clean and well maintained.	○	○	○	○	○
g. Teachers have adequate space to work productively.	○	○	○	○	○
h. The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning.	○	○	○	○	○
i. The reliability and speed of Internet connections in this school are sufficient to support instructional practices.	○	○	○	○	○

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.
**Instructional materials include items such as textbooks, curriculum materials, content references, etc.
***Professional personnel includes positions such as school counselors, nurses, school psychologists and social workers, library media specialists, etc.

Managing Student Conduct

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about managing student conduct in your school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. Students at this school understand expectations for their conduct.	○	○	○	○	○
b. Students at this school follow rules of conduct.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Policies and procedures about student conduct are clearly understood by the faculty.	○	○	○	○	○
d. School administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct.	○	○	○	○	○
e. School administrators support **teachers*** efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom.	○	○	○	○	○
f. Teachers consistently enforce rules for student conduct.	○	○	○	○	○
g. The faculty work in a school environment that is safe.	○	○	○	○	○

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.

Teacher Leadership

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about teacher leadership in your school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. Teachers* are recognized as educational experts.	○	○	○	○	○
b. Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Teachers are relied upon to make decisions about educational issues.	○	○	○	○	○
d. Teachers are encouraged to participate in school leadership roles.	○	○	○	○	○
e. The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions to solve problems.	○	○	○	○	○
f. In this school we take steps to solve problems.	○	○	○	○	○
g. Teachers are effective leaders in this school.	○	○	○	○	○

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.

Please indicate the role teachers* have at your school in each of the following areas.

	No role at all	Small role	Moderate role	Large role	Don't Know
a. Selecting instructional materials and resources	○	○	○	○	○
b. Devising teaching techniques	○	○	○	○	○
c. Setting grading and student assessment practices	○	○	○	○	○
d. Determining the content of in-service professional development programs	○	○	○	○	○
e. Establishing student discipline procedures	○	○	○	○	○
f. Providing input on how the school budget will be spent	○	○	○	○	○
g.The selection of teachers new to this school	○	○	○	○	○
h. School improvement planning	○	○	○	○	○

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.

Teachers* have an appropriate level of decision making in this school.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Don't know

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.

School Leadership

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about school leadership in your school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. The faculty and leadership have a shared vision.	○	○	○	○	○
b. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.	○	○	○	○	○
c. **Teachers*** feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them.	○	○	○	○	○
d. The **school leadership**** consistently supports teachers.	○	○	○	○	○
e. Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.	○	○	○	○	○
f. The school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning.	○	○	○	○	○
g. Teacher performance is assessed objectively.	○	○	○	○	○
h. Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching.	○	○	○	○	○
i. The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.	○	○	○	○	○
j. The school improvement team provides effective leadership at this school.	○	○	○	○	○
k. The faculty are recognized for accomplishments.	○	○	○	○	○

*Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.
**School leadership is an individual, group of individuals or team within the school that focuses on managing a complex operation. This may include scheduling; ensuring a safe school environment; reporting on students' academic, social and behavioral performance; using resources to provide the textbooks and instructional materials necessary for teaching and learning; overseeing the care and maintenance of the physical plant; or developing and implementing the school budget.

The school leadership* makes a sustained effort to address teacher concerns about:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. Leadership issues	○	○	○	○	○
b. Facilities and resources	○	○	○	○	○
c. The use of time in my school	○	○	○	○	○
d. Professional development	○	○	○	○	○
e. Teacher leadership	○	○	○	○	○
f. Community support and involvement	○	○	○	○	○
g. Managing student conduct	○	○	○	○	○
h. Instructional practices and support	○	○	○	○	○
i. New teacher support	○	○	○	○	○

*School leadership is an individual, group of individuals or team within the school that focuses on managing a complex operation. This may include scheduling; ensuring a safe school environment; reporting on students' academic, social and behavioral performance; using resources to provide the textbooks and instructional materials necessary for teaching and learning; overseeing the care and maintenance of the physical plant; or developing and implementing the school budget.

Professional Development

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about professional development in your school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. Sufficient resources are available for **professional development*** in my school.	○	○	○	○	○
b. An appropriate amount of time is provided for professional development.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Professional development offerings are data driven.	○	○	○	○	○
d. Professional learning opportunities are aligned with the school's improvement plan.	○	○	○	○	○
e. Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of individual **teachers.****	○	○	○	○	○
f. Professional development deepens teachers content knowledge.	○	○	○	○	○
g. Professional development provides teachers with strategies to involve families and other community members as active partners in their children's education.	○	○	○	○	○
h. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice.	○	○	○	○	○
i. Follow up is provided from professional development in this school.	○	○	○	○	○
j. Professional development provides ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices.	○	○	○	○	○
k. Professional development is evaluated and results are communicated to teachers.	○	○	○	○	○
l. Professional development enhances teachers' ability to implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student learning needs.	○	○	○	○	○
m. Professional development enhances teachers' abilities to improve student learning.	○	○	○	○	○

*Professional development includes all opportunities, formal and informal, where adults learn from one another including graduate courses, in service, workshops, conferences, professional learning communities and other meetings focused on improving teaching and learning.
**Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.

In which of the following areas (if any) do you need professional development to teach your students more effectively?

	Yes	No
a. Your content area	○	○
b. Common Core Standards	○	○
c. Student assessment	○	○
d. Differentiating instruction	○	○
e. Special education (students with disabilities)	○	○
f. Special education (gifted and talented)	○	○
g. English Language Learners (ELL)	○	○
h. Closing the Achievement Gap	○	○
i. Methods of teaching	○	○
j. Reading strategies	○	○
k. Integrating technology into instruction	○	○
l. Classroom management techniques	○	○

In the past 2 years, have you had 10 clock hours or more of professional development in any of the following areas?

	Yes	No
a. Your content area	○	○
b. Common Core Standards	○	○
c. Student assessment	○	○
d. Differentiating instruction	○	○
e. English Language Learners (ELL)	○	○
f. Special education (students with disabilities)	○	○
g. Special education (gifted and talented)	○	○
h. Closing the Achievement Gap	○	○
i. Methods of teaching	○	○
j. Reading strategies	○	○
k. Integrating technology into instruction	○	○
l. Classroom management techniques	○	○

Estimate the number of total days in which you participated in professional development during the 2011-12 school year:

- 0-1 (approximately 0-8 hours)
- 2-4 (approximately 16-32 hours)
- 5-7 (approximately 40-56 hours)
- 8-10 (approximately 64-80 hours)
- 11-13 (approximately 88 – 104 hours)
- 14 days or more (105 hours or more)

Instructional Practices and Support

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about instructional practices and support in your school.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. **State assessment*** data are available in time to impact instructional practices.					
b. **Local assessment**** data are available in time to impact instructional practices.					
c. **Teachers***** in this school use assessment data to inform their instruction.					
d. The curriculum taught in this school is aligned with Common Core Standards.					
e. Teachers work in **professional learning communities****** to develop and align instructional practices.					
f. Provided supports (i.e. instructional coaching, professional learning communities, etc.) translate to improvements in instructional practices by teachers.					
g. Teachers are encouraged to try new things to improve instruction.					
h. Teachers at my school are assigned classes that maximize their likelihood of success with students.					
i. Teachers have autonomy to make decisions about instructional delivery (i.e. pacing, materials and pedagogy).					

*State assessments include end of course and end of grade tests.
**Local assessments are standardized instruments offered across schools within the district and can include any norm or criterion referenced tests, diagnostics, or local benchmarks.
***Teachers means a majority of teachers in your school.
****Professional learning communities include formalized groupings of teachers within or across grade and subject areas that meet regularly to plan and assess instructional strategies for student success.

Overall

Which of the following best describes your immediate professional plans? (Select one.)

- Continue teaching at my current school
- Continue teaching in this district, but leave this school
- Continue teaching in this state, but leave this district
- Continue working in education, but pursue an **administrative position***
- Continue working in education, but pursue a **non-administrative position****
- Leave education entirely

*Administrative positions include principal or assistant principal.
**Non-administrative positions include, but are not limited to, guidance counselor, curriculum specialist, instructional coach.

Which aspect of your teaching conditions most affects your willingness to keep teaching at your school? (Select one.)

- Time during the work day
- Facilities and resources
- Community support and involvement
- Managing student conduct
- Teacher leadership
- School leadership
- Professional development
- Instructional practices and support

Which aspect of your teaching conditions is MOST important to you in promoting student learning? (Select one.)

- Time during the work day
- Facilities and resources
- Community support and involvement
- Managing student conduct
- Teacher leadership
- School leadership
- Professional development
- Instructional practices and support

Overall, my school is a good place to work and learn.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Don't know

Thank you for time. Please submit your responses.

Appendix C Survey item construct

Summary of TELL Tennessee Validity and Reliability

Based on external and internal analysis of TELL Tennessee Survey data, results indicate the most appropriate structure of the survey includes eight factors consisting of 72 questions.

Exhibit 7 provides questions within each construct generated from the reliability analyses. These eight constructs will be the basis for other analyses investigating how outcomes of interest are associated with teaching and learning conditions, as well as other sub-factors discussed earlier.

EXHIBIT 7. TELL TENNESSEE CONSTRUCTS AND ITEMS

Construct	Number of Items	Items
Time	7	Class sizes are reasonable such that teachers have the time available to meet the needs of all students. Teachers have time available to collaborate with colleagues. Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions. Teachers have sufficient instructional time to meet the needs of all students. The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient. Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine administrative paperwork teachers are required to do. Teachers are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students.
Facilities and Resources	9	Teachers have sufficient access to appropriate instructional materials. The school environment is clean and well maintained. Teachers have access to reliable communications technology, including phones, faxes and email. The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning. Teachers have sufficient access to instructional technology, including computers, printers, software and internet access. Teachers have sufficient access to office equipment and supplies such as copy machines, paper, pens, etc. Teachers have sufficient access to a broad range of professional support personnel. The reliability and speed of Internet connections in this school are sufficient to support instructional practices. Teachers have adequate space to work productively.

EXHIBIT 7. TELL TENNESSEE CONSTRUCTS AND ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Construct	Number of Items	Items
Community Support and Involvement	8	Community members support teachers, contributing to their success with students. This school maintains clear, two-way communication with parents/guardians and the community. This school does a good job of encouraging parent/guardian involvement. Parents/guardians are influential decision makers in this school. Teachers provide parents/guardians with useful information about student learning. Parents/guardians know what is going on in this school. Parents/guardians support teachers, contributing to their success with students. The community we serve is supportive of this school.
Managing Student Conduct	7	School administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom. Students at this school understand expectations for their conduct. School administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct. Policies and procedures about student conduct are clearly understood by the faculty. The faculty work in a school environment that is safe. Students at this school follow rules of conduct. School administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom.
Teacher Leadership	8	Teachers are relied upon to make decisions about educational issues. Teachers are effective leaders in this school. Teachers are recognized as educational experts. The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions to solve problems. Teachers have an appropriate level of influence on decision making in this school. In this school we take steps to solve problems. Teachers are encouraged to participate in school leadership roles. Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.

Appendix D Informed Consent for Adults

Study Title Teacher Empowerment Via a Walk-through Initiative

Study Purpose and Rationale
For this study I will investigate the relationship of an administrative walk-through initiative and how teachers perceive their level of empowerment.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
To be eligible to participate in this study, you must over the age of 18.

Participation Procedures and Duration
For this project, you will be asked to complete a 101 item survey about teacher empowerment that will take 30 minutes to complete. Ten participants will be asked to complete an interview that will take an approximately an additional 30 minutes to complete.

Data Confidentiality or Anonymity
All data will be maintained as confidential and no identifying information such as names will appear in any publication or presentation of the data. No information regarding your participation in this study or any information you provide will be shared with your current supervisor or employer.

Storage of Data
Data will also be entered into a software program and stored on the researcher's password-protected flash drive for three years and then deleted. Only the researcher will have access to the data.

Risks or Discomforts
The only anticipated risk from participating in this study is that you may not feel comfortable answering some of the questions. You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable and you may quit the study at any time.

Benefits
There are no perceived benefits for participating in this study.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw your permission at anytime for any reason without penalty or prejudice from the investigator. Please feel free to ask any questions of the investigator before pressing the "yes" button and at any time during the study

IRB Contact Information
For one's rights as a research subject, you may contact the following: For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Director, Office of Research Integrity, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, (765) 285-5070 or at irb@bsu.edu.

Study Title Empowering Teachers During An Administrative Walk-Through Initiative at a Turnaround School

Consent

I agree to participate in this research project entitled, "Empowering Teachers During An Administrative Walk-Through Initiative at a Turnaround School." I have had the study explained to me and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have read the description of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I may request, from the researcher, a written copy of this document.

To the best of my knowledge, I meet the inclusion/exclusion criteria for participation (described above) in this study. Pressing the yes button I consent to participate.

Appendix E Walk-through Form

Classroom Walkthrough Checklist								
Teacher:		**Date:**			**Time:**			
Observer:			**Grade/Subject Level:**					
	Indicate evidence of each of the following as observed:							
	Student work is displayed and contains standards, objectives, rubrics							
	There is evidence that technology has been integrated into instruction							
	The classroom is neat and free from clutter							
	Required classroom materials are within easy access of students							
	Pertinent learning concepts are on display in the classroom							
	A schedule/agenda with objectives for the day is posted in the classroom							
	The classroom appears safe and meets health and safety regulations							
	Curriculum and Instructions:							
	Direct Instruction is provided by the teacher							
	Multiple instructional strategies rather than lecture are being used							
	Appropriate materials are being used; worksheets are at a minimum							
	Students have cooperative and collaborative work opportunities							
	Immediate feedback is provided to the student responses							

	A variety of evaluation techniques are used to assess learning
	Learning is related to real life experiences of students
	The curriculum is being followed in providing instruction
	High expectations for performance is evident
	Curriculum calendars are in use
	Management:
	Students are on task and engaged in learning
	Classroom disruptions are handled quickly, fairly, and consistently
	Students appear to be relaxed and responsive to the teacher
	Respect for the teacher and students is evident in student's behavior
	The MCS student handbook policies are being enforced
	Comments:

Appendix F Interview Protocol

EMPOWERING TEACHERS
DURING AN ADMINISTRATIVE WALK-THROUGH INITIATIVE
AT A TURNAROUND SCHOOL

Interview Protocol

Date_____

Pseudonym _____

Introduction: Introduce self, inform of the purpose of the study, provide informed consent, provide structure if the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym), Ask if they have questions, test audio recording equipment, SMILE and make sure participant feels comfortable.

Good morning (afternoon). My name is Chuck Reynolds. I am currently completing a doctoral program at Ball State University in the field of education. Thank you for coming. I am gathering information on teacher empowerment during a walk-through initiative. I would like to get your perceptions of teacher empowerment during your walk-through initiative. There are no right or wrong answers or desirable or undesirable answers. I want you to feel as comfortable as possible with saying what you really think and how you feel. I will be making an audio recording of our interview and taking notes to help remember and make notes of our conversation. The use of the pseudonym is to protect your identity and enable me to link your comments with your survey if needed. Do you have any questions? Great. Thank you and let's get started. (SMILE)

Interview Questions

1. Describe to me the moments in your classroom that you feel empowered.

2. How does the administrative walk-through initiative impact your feeling of empowerment?

3. How does the new evaluation process affect your feelings about teacher empowerment?

4. What actions have the school leadership, the administrators, taken to help you operate professionally as an empowered teacher?

5. In what ways do time, facility and resources, policy / procedures, and instructional support or bolster your feeling of empowerment?

6. Explain how professional development opportunities have enhanced your professional growth and feeling of empowerment.

Conclusion: Do they have anything else they would like to add, thank them for their participation, offer them a copy of the results, and record any personal feelings, thoughts, and or reactions about the interview.

Is there anything else you would like to share or add about teacher empowerment that you feel is important for me know? Thank you so much for your time and honest input. If you would like a copy of the results, please let me know and I will get a copy to you as soon as it is finished. Again, I truly appreciate your participation. Thank you. (Stop audio recording – and shake their hand)